

The

# ENGLISH HOME



*Celebrating the essence of English style*

September 2015 | Issue 127 | £4.10 | UK Edition

SPOTLIGHT ON

## BRITISH TALENT

*Rising stars in textiles, furniture, glassware and more*

## PASTORAL PLEASURES

Fruitful recipes,  
romantic hydrangeas,  
rustic home buys

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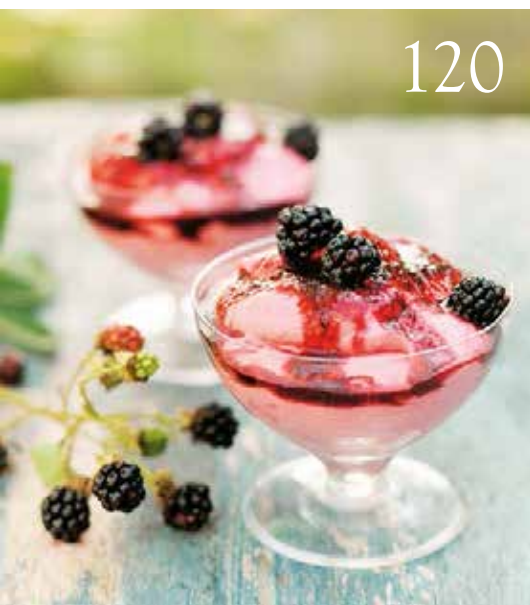
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## A letter from home



### *Cheers!*

Raise a toast to our 15th anniversary year with our exclusive cocktail: *The English Home Martini*

35ml BLOOM Gin  
15ml sweet white Vermouth (Lillet Blanc is ideal)  
½ teaspoon of honey  
1 ripe strawberry  
2 sprigs of thyme, around 5cm long (one for garnish)

Muddle the strawberry, thyme and honey with BLOOM Gin until the honey has blended with the gin. Add the Vermouth and stir with ice for 30-45 seconds. Double strain using a tea sieve or similar to remove the pieces of strawberry and thyme. Pour into a chilled Martini glass or champagne coupette. Garnish with a sprig of thyme.



**T**his year marks a rather momentous milestone for *The English Home* magazine as it is our 15th anniversary year. I have had the pleasure of editing the title for seven years, and can scarcely believe that so much time has passed. I know from your letters and emails that many of our readers have read this title for even longer. We cherish such a dedicated and passionate following.

Each editor and team has given the title their own subtle flavour over the years, but I believe we have all tried to hold the same set of editorial values dear. We aim to celebrate a uniquely English approach to interiors in a warm and engaging way, and are constantly seeking out subtle ways to add prettiness to interiors as well as finding the most beautiful buys to help you create your dream home. We take great pleasure in playing a role in bringing new talents to the attention of a wider audience – be it a top-level design studio team, an individual artisan, or a fledgling business just starting to blossom, but needing the oxygen of exposure. With this in mind, we have used the advent of our anniversary to fulfil our brand ethos of celebrating the essence of English style by curating a special feature in which we have invited iconic, established, and respected brands to highlight future talents. And, at the end of September, I will be judging Best in British Craftsmanship at the Decorex exhibition in London, to further this aim.

Whether you are a first-time reader or a long-term subscriber we sincerely hope that you find just the right blend of inspiration, practical advice and escapism that you seek. And do try a glass of the delicious cocktail recipe created exclusively for us by BLOOM Gin to commemorate our celebrations.

Here's to the next 15 years,

Kerry Harp-Cuss, Editor





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**Publishing Office** The Chelsea Magazine Company Ltd,

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Tel 020 7349 3700 Fax 020 7349 3701

Email [info@chelseamagazines.com](mailto:info@chelseamagazines.com)

## NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 2 SEPTEMBER 2015

THE ENGLISH HOME (UK EDITION) ISSN no 1468-0238.

### SUBSCRIPTION OFFICES

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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UK £54.50 (12 issues)

Overseas £64.50 (12 issues)

USA \$32.75 (6 issues) \$65.50 (12 issues)

Canada \$39.95 (6 issues)

\$79.90 (12 issues)

### NEWS DISTRIBUTION

UK and rest of world: SEYMOUR  
DISTRIBUTION LTD, 2 East Poultry  
Avenue, London EC1A 9PT  
(Above Smithfield Meat Market)  
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USA and Canada: CMG. LLC/155  
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SITTING ROOM CREATED BY  
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We're giving away a free sink cabinet worth up to £975 when you spend £8,000 or more on any kitchen.

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\*Free sink base cabinet offer closes 31st August 2015. For full details please ask in-store or visit [neptune.com/offers](http://neptune.com/offers)

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#### Fabric focus

In period properties, the colours in which one can decorate architectural elements can be limited, to sympathise with historic surroundings. In such cases, a blend of natural and zesty colour may be provided with Vanessa Arbuthnott's new range of tweed fabrics paired with the imaginative Birds and Beasts collection. Armchair in tweed Bracken fabric and piping in tweed Storm, both £68 a metre; cushion fabrics from £48 a metre, all Vanessa Arbuthnott

# HOME Comforts

Revel in the season of brightly-hued leaves and warming fires with a selection of cosy, practical and pretty buys that will make an uplifting impression





#### CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

##### Gathering goodness

A hand-woven trug with a British leather handle will quickly become a gardener's best friend. It can be used for collecting cut-flowers or garden produce.

*Trug, 50cm long, 8cm high, 25cm wide, £85, Rush Matters*

##### Glossy touch

In this bathroom a modern light fitting and sleek floor tiles blend seamlessly with a softly modern sink and elegant free-standing bath. Note how the light fitting and bath are wedded by a lustrous white-glaze finish.

*London freestanding bath, £4,320; Hoxton furniture, all CP Hart*

##### Golden palms

This gilded palm wallpaper is available in two different coloured backdrops with contrasting effects. Here, a gentle white background has a subtle charm, suitable for hallways or sitting rooms. Classical in mood, it sits naturally with timeless furnishings. Alternatively, the midnight-blue backdrop has an exotic flavour, ideal for a dramatic dining room. *Marrakech Palm, £78 for a 10m roll, Barneby Gates* ▶





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#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

##### Glimmer & glow

The metallic qualities of this leafy light beautifully combine character with craftsmanship. Hang at eye-level to show off the ornate detail. *Leaf electric wall light in antique silver, £460, Gretchen Boon*

##### Burnished colours

Lay the dinner table with linen in mustard and muted lavender, with a touch of gold: perfect shades for an autumnal gathering.

*Eastern Promise collection: napkins, from £8.99; tablecloths, from £54.99; runners from £19.99, all LinenMe*

##### Practical option

Porcelain tiles are a popular choice for kitchen floors as they are hard-wearing and easy to maintain. Fired Earth's new unglazed porcelain range is available in eight block colours for lovely chequerboard effect.

*Milan tiles, £5.45 each, Fired Earth*

##### Indulgent comfort

Soften the move towards the colder months by dressing the bed in layers of cashmere. These understated colours will be a luxurious treat to curl up under.

*Cable-knit cashmere cushions £175; cable-knit cashmere throw £525; simple check cashmere throw, £550; plain cashmere throw, £550, knitted contrast trim cashmere throw, £550, all Johnstons of Egin ►*







#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

##### Floral elaboration

Inspired by the Jean Monro archives, this print has been styled in a classic manner. Its effect is magnified when placed with further floral print cushions. However, if positioned within a more contemporary setting, contrast with silver and metallic surfaces or sharp touches of yellow. The print is also available in red, green and grey colourways. *Templeton Garden, £76.60 a roll, Jean Monro*

##### Lantern showcase

This golden hurricane container dresses up any plain white pillar candle to become a smart decoration befitting for dinner parties or a permanent spot on the dining room sideboard. *Geometric Brass Hurricane, £32, Graham and Green*

##### Timeless influence

Oka has produced a collection in homage to 1920s 'tastemaker' Nancy Lancaster, who is credited with co-creating the classic English country-house style. This distressed chest of drawers embodies her romantic vision to blend rustic and grander pieces. *Hopkirk chest of drawers, £695, Oka* ■





A photograph of a grand Georgian interior hallway. The space features a high, vaulted ceiling with intricate white plasterwork. On the left, two large, fluted marble columns support the structure. The floor is paved with a pattern of light-colored square tiles and dark diamond-shaped tiles. In the center, a white door is set within a decorative frame. To the right, a dark wood console table holds two large, ornate lamps with textured shades. A large, abstract blue and white artwork is mounted on the wall above the table. Three glass-enclosed pendant lights hang from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is one of classic elegance and historical grandeur.

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# BACK TO BASICS

Bring a rustic mood into your home with these pared-back, utility buys



**1 PULL UP A SEAT** Imo bar stool, £390-£420, Pinch **2 SIMPLE STRIPES** Harwin napkins, £36 for a set of 4, Anthropologie **3 PITCHER PERFECT** Saltglaze water jug, £28, Labour and Wait **4 TEA TIME** Enamel stove kettle in flint, £30, Hum & Hum **5 ONE SCOOP OR TWO** Rice paddle, deep scoop or flat, £12 each, Kirsten Hecktermann **6 A TOUCH OF THE ORIENT** Tosaka broom, £105; Harimi dustpan no. 4, from £18.50, both Objects of Use **7 LET THERE BE LIGHT** White Amiri pendant, £100, Luma **8 CLASSIC DESIGN** Perigot carpet beater, £14, Amara



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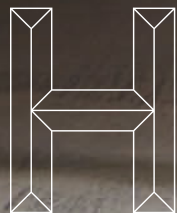


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# THE ENGLISH HOME NOTEBOOK

Our monthly digest of inside information on people, places and pursuits

## PURSUITS



### Pressing matters

This year, once tarts, cakes, pies and preserves have all been exhausted, consider turning a glut of apples into juice. First make an apple crush by chopping apples very finely in a food processor – freezing them beforehand can help with this. Then place the crush in an apple press, turning the crank slowly but steadily for best results. Use the resulting juice within three days,

before it starts to ferment, or freeze or pasteurise to prolong life. A rule of thumb is that nine kilograms of apples will yield four litres of juice, and flavour can be adjusted to taste by altering the varieties in the press: **bramleys** will be tart, whilst **coxes** will be sweeter. Apple press, £135, Garden Trading. For other bottling equipment, try [vigopresses.co.uk](http://vigopresses.co.uk)

## Diary – events worth noting

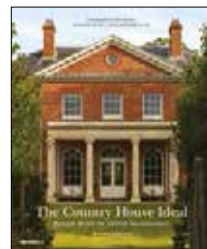
**EMBELLISHMENTS** Showcasing ‘unfussy antiques and elegant period design’, the Decorative Antiques and Textiles Fair was started 30 years ago by antiques dealer Patricia Harvey and husband, Ralph. Items such as Italian gilded sofas, glass table lamps and silk-on-silk embroidery will feature in the fair, which is based in Battersea Park. 29 September – 4 October, [decorativefair.com](http://decorativefair.com)



**INSPIRATION** Design Centre Chelsea Harbour’s showcase of the new autumnal collections, Focus/15, is a much-anticipated fixture on the calendar of designers, architects and style-seekers. Over 500 brands in 103 showrooms participate. 20-25 September, [dcch.co.uk](http://dcch.co.uk)

**CURATION** At Harewood House, West Yorkshire, tickets to the estate’s fourth annual antiques fair include a special offer on visiting the state rooms and exhibitions in the House. Many of the high-calibre dealers are BADA or LAPADA members. 11-13 September, [harewoodfair.com](http://harewoodfair.com)

## A Good Read



**The Country House Ideal**, by Jeremy Musson (£40, Merrell)

The classical country house is not peculiar to the eighteenth century. Continued demand has ensured that the principles of classicism are combined with modern conveniences. Few practices are better at achieving this than ADAM Architecture, and, in this work, critic Jeremy Musson examines their oeuvre with aplomb.

ADAM Architecture features in our article on *Commissioning an Architect*, see page 102. ▶



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## PEOPLE

### Anna Day & Ellie Jauncey

With headdresses for Russell Brand and Jemima Khan as well as designs for Marc Jacobs under their belt, the pair behind The Flower Appreciation Society are among the popular band of florists concentrating on loose arrangements and locally grown flowers. Day and Jauncey met in 2009 and when both were at a loose end and pulling pints in an east London pub. They soon discovered a mutual appreciation for flowers, and the rest, as always, is history. With no shop to speak of but a studio in Hackney, the pair source flowers specifically for every commission. Their first book, *An A to Z of All Things Floral* (£20, Sphere), is out now. [theflowerappreciationsociety.co.uk](http://theflowerappreciationsociety.co.uk)



### LITTLE BLACK BOOK

#### JENNY BLANC

The international interior designer reveals a few favoured resources

#### TREASURED WALLPAPERS AND FABRICS

Here at Jenny Blanc we all love Manuel Canovas fabrics and wallpapers for their beautiful designs and striking colours. I particularly like L'Envol from the new Paulette collection with its playful motif of hot-air balloons.

#### PERIOD FURNITURE DESIGN

I love Georgian furniture and my home is full of antiques. Part of the pleasure of antiques comes from searching out just the right piece. Happy hunting grounds are Kempton Park's Antiques Market and Guinevere on the Kings Road.

#### SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

I love Paris and especially the basilica of Sacre Coeur. Its exotic architecture and pristine white stone dominate the skyline of Montmartre and you get a spectacular panoramic view of the city of Paris from the top of the dome.

#### BEAUTIFUL THINGS ARE TO BE USED

I have a set of beautiful and delicate etched champagne coupes; antique pieces from the 1920s. I use them every time I open a bottle of champagne. My philosophy is that if you have beautiful things, you should use them and not put them away in a cupboard.

#### REFRESHING MY OWN HOME

I am currently re-designing my study in the annex in the garden. I use it as a quiet place for writing and to catch up with friends with my gorgeous golden retriever, Mr Darcy, sitting at my feet. My office needs to be ergonomically functional with everything I need close to hand, peaceful and beautifully designed so that it is relaxing to work there. Colour and elegant furniture play a great part in achieving these requirements. ▶



### Jim & Sheena Lawrence

Twenty years ago, Jim and Sheena Lawrence began Jim Lawrence Lighting and Home from the family farm in Suffolk. Today the business employs over 100 skilled craftspeople in the Suffolk workshops. Beautifully designed, accessibly priced pieces are made exclusively in Britain. The collection now also includes soft furnishings and a curtain-making service. To mark the occasion, the company has launched three new outdoor lighting designs: the Chelsea and Finsbury wall lanterns and the Dalston wall light. [jim-lawrence.co.uk](http://jim-lawrence.co.uk)



## PLACES



### Decorex

More than 400 exhibitors will showcase new collections at Decorex, 20-23 September, in the expansive grounds of Syon Park, west London. Taking the theme, 'The Future of Luxury', the four-day event, which opens the annual London Design Festival, features a gamut of interiors requisites, from furniture and fabrics to tableware and bedding. Look out for Justin van Breda's new English Home furniture collection, fresh designs from Barneby Gates and collaboration between Blendworth Fabrics and Wedgwood. [decorex.com](http://decorex.com); [londondesignfestival.com](http://londondesignfestival.com)

### Darts Farm Shop

In Devon, those in the know stop at Darts Farm Shop, which was recently judged to be the best farm shop in the UK by FARMA, (the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association). Near Topsham, the family business places emphasis on food that is locally grown, reared, baked or caught, but with leading brand concessions, as well as a spa, bicycle hire and farm activities for children, this is a worthy stop when on en route to the coast. [dartsfarm.co.uk](http://dartsfarm.co.uk)



### Rye

The picturesque, medieval East Sussex town hosts its annual arts festival from 11-27 September. Dedicated to high-quality performances in music, literature and theatre, among other disciplines, a highlight is The Mad Boy, Lord Berners, My Grandmother and Me, on 25 September, in which Sofka Zinovieff reveals how she came to inherit Faringdon House.

Whilst in Rye, visit Lamb House, which has been home to both Henry James and EF Benson, who popularised the town in *Mapp and Lucinda*. [ryeartsfestival.co.uk](http://ryeartsfestival.co.uk); [nationaltrust.org.uk/lamb-house](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/lamb-house)

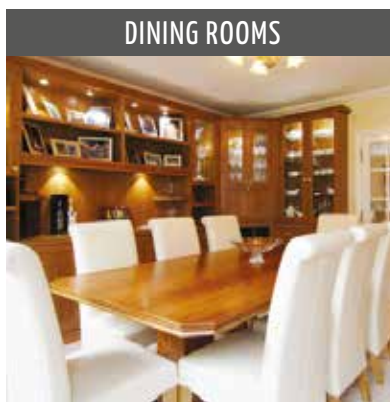




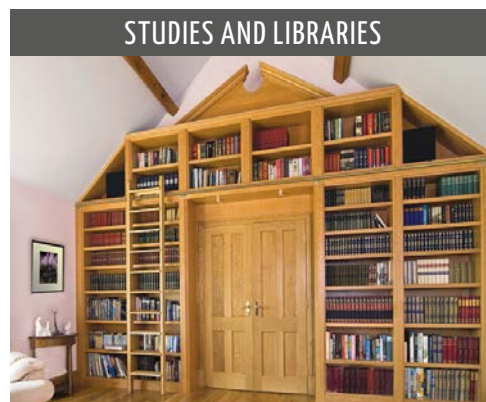
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# THOUGHTFUL TRANSLATION

Skills honed in one medium are sometimes transferable to another, as Paul and Lisa Grist have proved whilst working on this historical house in Suffolk

FEATURE CELIA RUFY PHOTOGRAPHS JODY STEWART



The great hall divides naturally into a dining and a seating area. Although original cross passages were long ago removed, the layout, which sees the main door opening opposite the stairs, refers back to the old arrangement. The mellow tones of wood and tiles give a warm consistency to this large area.









**ABOVE** Seating at the end of the great hall is grouped around a highly carved fireplace where Lisa displays part of her collection of Masons Ironstone.

**OPPOSITE** The dining table is unusually decorative and light in colour for a seventeenth-century piece. The Gristis found the table, and a set of ten chairs, at Cheffins auctioneers.

Paul Grist has built a successful business restoring the finest historic vehicles, including Alfa Romeos and Bugattis. When, in 2009, he and his wife, Lisa, decided it was time for him to limit this work to consultancy, he had another idea brewing and it was one in which Lisa was keen to get involved. "I'd always wanted to take on an ancient house as a project," Paul explains. "Although people are surprised, there are parallels with the experience of restoring vintage cars. What I've learned from the cars is that preservation is preferable to restoration, and the real fascination comes from doing the preservation in materials correct to the period, whether on a car or a building."

The Gristis began to search for their significant project by looking in a circle around where they were living, hoping to find a property that was within two hours' drive of Paul's business. They viewed ten

houses, all of different periods, but coming face to face with this Suffolk farmhouse took their breath away. They have forgotten who was first to speak, but Lisa says, "whichever of us it was, the word was 'Wow!'" Under a thatched roof, the glorious patterning in the brickwork is repeated right across the building's long frontage. For Lisa, the silence of the place also cast its spell, so did its position overlooking a valley and its own 14 acres of meadow. There was no doubt they would buy it.

For Paul, the great interest in the house is the way its development reflects changing architectural and domestic fashion over four centuries. "The oldest part is the kitchen and a small hall, now part of the great hall, with the room above, which are fifteenth century," he explains. "A parlour was built against the hall in the sixteenth century, and a major refurbishment at the end of the eighteenth century ▶









#### ABOVE LEFT

The stairs were constructed in green oak and fitted by Lavenham Joinery who took the design from sixteenth-century examples found in Suffolk houses of the period. The pictures are part of the Grist's collection of portraits purchased at various auctions. They bid for the lantern, too, at Cheffins auctioneers in Cambridge.

extended the building. As the house developed, the cross passages were taken out, creating the great hall we have now. In the mid-nineteenth century, service rooms were added at the rear, then, in the early twentieth century, a sitting room and bedroom above were built beyond the great hall. But the integrity of the structure was continued in the same style, so the elevation of the twentieth-century addition matches that of the fifteenth century rooms at the other end."

The Grist's began a long period of work on the house, and the seventeenth-century barn alongside it became their ally. Previous owners had installed a kitchen and lavatories on one side of the barn, so the builders set up a base and worked out of there independently. Paul and Lisa knew the house had to be re-wired and they also re-fitted four bathrooms, taking particular care to run pipework discreetly. "There were modern radiators throughout the house," Lisa says, "so we replaced them with an earlier design with filigree castings." After an extended search, they found early Suffolk paniments to extend tiling on the floor in the great hall, but a badly



laid, squeaky pine floor in the kitchen was soon removed in favour of a more suitable oak replacement.

The staircase was a major part of the project. The original had been lost at some stage and when Paul saw the modern softwood staircase he knew he could not live with it. He researched the correct style for this phase of the development and found an original staircase of the period, but was not allowed to install it. "The conservation officer told me that if we installed an original Elizabethan staircase it would confuse future historians." Instead, they were allowed to commission a new staircase, in the correct style, in green oak. Paul takes consolation from the quality of the work carried out by the joiner, who designed and made the new staircase using photographs and drawings from a reference book on Suffolk houses. Another conversation involved modern plate-glass windows with stick-on glazing bars at the back of the house. "We did convince the conservation officer that the building would benefit from properly made oak casements," Paul adds.

The simplicity of the kitchen with oak worktop and ►





**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT** The kitchen cupboards were made by Chas Crocker of Crockers Joinery and painted in Graphite, which is from Fired Earth along with the Moustier tiles cladding the Aga splash-back. The pendant light is from Dibor. The French gilded console in the great hall is placed beneath a handsome portrait; the frame was purchased at an antiques fair.

The complex gilded frame around a sacred picture on the landing is signed off with a painted cherub. Lisa Grist moved here with husband Paul in 2009. No stone is quarried in Suffolk, which has made brick a favourite building material. The status and wealth of early houses, such as this, was expressed in the height and decorative impact of its chimneys.





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painted cupboards – designed and made by a joiner friend – acknowledges its status as the oldest part of the house. The great hall with its grand oak front door is both dining and sitting room and allows for a bolder combination of furnishings. The Grists needed a dining table that would seat ten people and found this seventeenth century English oak gateleg table at their favourite auction house in Cambridge. Sofas in simple neutral slipcovers with bright elements introduced in cushions, sit on antique rugs that went temporarily into store after they sold a house in France. Gilded consoles, also from France, introduce a touch of grandeur. “In a bizarre way, they work,” Lisa laughs. This formality is taken up by the many portraits in the house. “We’ve had them for years,” Lisa adds, “mostly bought at auction. In fact we’ve only bought one or two pictures for this house.”

For this farmhouse of yeoman status, the decoration throughout is suitably restrained. “As the great hall is panelled and relatively dark, we wanted to keep other rooms light,” Lisa agrees. “We have used the same off-white tint on all the painted walls. Apart from anything else, it simplifies any touching-up that has to be done.” So, it is furnishings that have given each room a distinct character. Once again, the barn came

**ABOVE** “Our four-poster bed is an English assembly,” explains Lisa, “a marriage of French and German components.” The quilt and bedlinen are French. The walls are painted in Chalk White by Fired Earth.

**RIGHT** Bathroom fittings came from the Bathroom Discount Centre. Lisa painted the exterior of the bath in French Gray and the floor in Bone, both by Farrow & Ball.







into its own. “A friend came to stay,” Lisa explains, “and set up a workshop in the barn to make all the curtains and bed hangings.” The main bedroom has an English four-poster bed as its focus, and the principal guest bedroom has an antique French tapestry pelmet above the bed, along with crewelwork curtains. The attic bedroom has been kept delightfully simple, with single beds dressed in white.

Six years on, Paul insists there is always something to maintain in the house, but then he mentions having a couple of old tractors in the barn to play with; he will keep sharing skills between the two. ■

*The farmhouse is available to rent in certain months each year. Suffolk Secrets, 01502 722717, [suffolk-secrets.co.uk](http://suffolk-secrets.co.uk)*

**ABOVE** Lisa found the antique French tapestry pelmet for the guest bedroom at Alfies Antique Market in London 30 years ago. Bedside lamps and the crewelwork for curtains and stool are from Country & Eastern. Radiators are by Castrads.

**RIGHT** The attic bedroom holds a simple charm.





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# SPINNING STRAW INTO GOLD

An abandoned Wiltshire barn is given renewed purpose by a resourceful artist with a keen eye and a golden touch



The kitchen is very much at the heart of this home, where daily life revolves around the Irish dining table.



FEATURE VAISHNAVI BRASSEY  
PHOTOGRAPHS HUNTLEY HEDWORTH





**ABOVE** Generations of Barbette's family can be seen in the photographs adorning the walls in the kitchen, whilst her grandchildren can often be found curled up on the invitingly vibrant sofa.

Barbette Quinn does not use the word 'wreck' lightly when she describes the house she purchased four years ago. "It was totally derelict – full of straw." She had first spotted the unremarkable Victorian barn nestling beneath a hill in the rolling Somerset countryside a couple of years beforehand. Nothing seemed to be happening to the property, and she decided to put in an offer before it went onto the market.

An artist gifted with an unusual degree of eye-hand coordination, Barbette is blessed with both the vision and the elbow grease to translate her vision into reality. "If you want something you have to work for it," she says. "You always go through a period when you are really tired, but it's worth it." From the dirt floor up, she has somehow wrought a uniquely personal home with an extraordinarily established feel.

Reviving the skeletal hayloft involved strengthening the existing foundations after an internal wall collapsed, installing underfloor heating and lifting off the entire roof for repairs and insulation. Was anything left? "The walls were okay, but I had to bash holes in them to make windows," she explains. What is now a spacious country kitchen was merely the footprint of what may have once been a milking parlour.

"I bought all the drainpipes and guttering second-hand," she remembers. "It's cast iron: very, very, heavy. I had to keep going back to get another section, then clean it all down and paint it." Between coats, she would turn out a batch of sparkling elderflower wine or nip out for a walk up Cley Hill, the neighbouring Iron Age hill fort, or work towards establishing the charming lavender-and-box-hedge garden. The courtyard was little more than a slab of concrete when she arrived. For all the tranquillity of her surroundings, Barbette clearly does not sit around. ►





**CLOCKWISE  
FROM TOP LEFT**

The brilliantly back-saving shallow French farmhouse sink is original, but Kohler's Rustique sink is similar.

The green Canadian medicine bottle "was given by a friend who knows I like coloured glass." The portrait of Barbette is by her sister, Margot. The pomegranate is a favourite subject for still lifes.

The delicate slit window in the sitting room complements Barbette's love of early Renaissance styles and the gabled arch beams by English Oak Buildings.





*The entire house is an understated still life composition of global objets. Everything, including the kitchen sink, has a story*

**ABOVE** Barbette's artistic talents continue with a luminous still life of lemons, and a cabbage lunette above the door. The 'Thinking Man' statue on the table was made by her son, Hugo, in his teens.

Considering this is "about the eighth" house Barbette has "done" in twenty years, this unstinting care is even more remarkable. Past labours of love have included a converted coaching inn, a moated manor house and some revamped reading rooms. "I've always been able to look at something and see what it's going to look like when it's finished," she muses. "I'm always amazed at artistic friends who tell me they can't see it at all." Even more surprising is that she claims that it does not really get easier with each one. She finally concedes, "You know the tradespeople and you have more experience, but every building has its own problems. I have never tackled a barn before."

Some might view Barbette as the ultimate Renaissance woman. Not only are her paintings influenced heavily by the fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries, but resuscitation of wrecks is only one in a long list of talents. Evidence of Barbette's keen and creative eye is everywhere – counterpoised by her refreshingly matter-of-fact temperament. "I'm interested in architecture, that's why I like doing buildings," she admits, indicating the Piranesi engravings on the wall. The delicate garden stair railings are her own design, "made by my welder at a car place." Below, in the hallway hangs a beautifully executed copy of a fifteenth-century mural. "Oh, that!" she observes. "It's not finished. I used to paint it when the builders were here so I could keep an eye on them."

Her low-key quips belie the fact that, despite little formal training, her CV is filled with impressive feats of skill and creativity. She was part of the all-female ►





**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT** The eighteenth-century Piranesi etching (one of four) reveals an interest in architecture. The Cromwell clock is from Hares Antiques and the wooden chairs are from a dealer in France. White stone fruit from Volterra, Italy. A concrete yard was transformed into a garden. Steps were

built, from bricks found in the barn, to meet the hayloft window. The cast-iron guttering is from Wells Reclamation. Finney's Saicos colour wax on pine floorboards creates a sense of light in the self-contained studio annex. The painting above the door was chosen during a visit to a Romanian orphanage.







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team that restored the Edward II State Rooms at the Tower of London, and was commissioned by a major West End producer to decorate his stately pile. She has also turned her expert hand to illuminated manuscripts, kilim restoration and gilding. A car accident cut short her experience of art college and, soon after, she found herself married and never resumed her degree. Three children later, whilst restoring a house in Italy, she came across a series of semi-circular sixteenth-century architectural paintings of the Medici Palaces. She thought these lunettes might make good bedheads. Before long, she was getting commissions from people who wanted their own houses immortalised with ten layers of gesso and her gem-like tones of egg tempera.

Since completing the barn, she has been focusing on the luminous still lifes hanging in her self-contained studio annex, which doubles as a bijoux B&B. The entire house is an understated still life composition of global *objets*. Everything, including the kitchen sink – which came from France – has a story: a rug brought back by a friend visiting Nepal; a painting ►

**ABOVE** The half-moon bedhead is a reproduction of Utens' Sixteenth-century lunette of the Florentine *Castello di Cafaggiolo*.

**LEFT** The main guest bedroom is furnished with a French walnut-wood bed, found on eBay.





**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** Wherever she did not re-use bricks found in the barn as flooring, Barbette chose seagrass matting by the Bristol Carpet Manufacturing Co. The unfinished egg tempera mural of white doves is based on a fifteenth-century Palace Chapel in Portugal. The delicate duck-egg guest bedroom contains a fine French desk from Wells Reclamation.

she chose in a Romanian orphanage (Barbette sent painting supplies to the artist as payment); her grandparents' wedding china, commissioned in Paris, decorates a wall; white stone fruit from Volterra, given by a sister. "Nothing's very valuable. I just pick things up." The kitchen is uncommonly cosy, with bowing bookshelves and a sofa where her grandchildren sit and read whilst Barbette cooks. This is clearly the heart of the home, with an arrangement of monochrome photographs of grandparents, parents and children.

It seems as though the green-and-gold-fingered mistress-of-all-trades has come to rest at last. Or is she planning the next project? "Not right now. I want to get on with my painting and I want to do other things, really. I'm currently doing up a shepherd's hut." It transpires that this will also be available as a charming addition to the B&B – but not before the ceiling is adorned with gilded stars. ■





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# ISLAND RETREAT

The ability to see past a property's unkempt appearance led Clara Baillie to discover her ideal island home in a secluded spot

FEATURE AND STYLING HESTER PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS NICK CARTER





Large, comfortable sofas line each side of the light-filled drawing room, with a fire at one end and French windows at the other. "This room used to be painted a deep red, but I longed to brighten it with a pale colour to lift the dark furniture and reflect the light from the sea," remembers Clara.





**ABOVE** The sun-filled front hall and stairway is a favourite spot for Freya the dog. Dulux Diamond Glaze, a water-based varnish with an added hint of white, has been painted onto the floors and stairs. Antique family furniture adds an inviting touch.

When charm is a fundamental necessity in the search for the perfect home, then perhaps even though the furniture may not be to taste, and the decoration inclined to make eyes water, that certain quality shines through it all and a second viewing confirms that the search is over. So it was with Clara Baillie and her husband Nigel when they found this beautiful house on the Isle of Wight. “We discovered that the island had wonderful stone houses, faded and rambling, with Agas and verandas and lots of space – and that was exactly what we were looking for.” Living in Windsor with their family for seventeen years, and having already spent five years searching for a new property, Clara was very excited to find an old house with such potential. “But I was the only one who could see it. My daughters were appalled by the messy appearance and my husband was pretty unconvinced.”

Set upon a large plot with views to the sea and in



a situation guaranteed to give both privacy and seclusion, this was the perfect opportunity for Clara to launch into a full-time job of renovation, both of the house and of the two-acre garden, which was long neglected and overgrown. Whilst their three grown daughters were engaged in their own pursuits and Nigel’s work meant that he travelled for months at a time each year, Clara was ready to engage all her focus and commitment.

As the house had not received substantial attention since the sixties, deterioration was inevitable. By 1994, the year the family moved in, it was necessary to embark on a complete – but phased – renovation programme. Initially installing gas central heating, re-wiring and renewing all the major services; treating damp, rot and even deathwatch beetle, and updating ugly windows to match the originals were the first major works. “I felt the house breathe a sigh of relief as it came into its own,” remembers Clara. Re-thatching ►





**LEFT** The ornate dresser comprises two pieces: a lower cupboard painted to match the shelf section. The chair is covered in an original Cath Kidston fabric.

**BELOW LEFT** The south-facing house front overlooks the gardens. To enlarge the area for family lunches, the patio was re-laid with York stone.

**BELOW** In the drawing room Osborne & Little's Feather and Eggs covers the deep sofa. It is a great favourite of Clara's.







*Clara was the only one to see the property's potential, "I felt the house breathe a sigh of relief as it came into its own"*

**ABOVE** In the kitchen, the family dining table is set for breakfast in front of a warm white Aga. The original flagstones are still in place throughout the room.

**ABOVE RIGHT** Clara loves to use crisp white linens and cottons for table and bedlinen.

the roof came later, as did the conservatory on the seaward side, designed for stormy winter days.

With a situation looking far out over the bay, Clara chose sea-washed colours that reflect the clarity of the island light. Pale blues and greys, creams and warm whites suit the large airy rooms, with plain or lightly patterned fabrics to bring a comfortable and informal family atmosphere to the house. The large stone-flagged kitchen on the ground floor was instantly warmed by the addition of an Aga, with paintwork on cupboards and dressers reflecting the same pale hues.

The large sunny morning room features French windows opening onto a terrace and swimming pool, one of the original features of the garden. This is very much a family room with enough space for children, grandchildren and dogs to come and go easily. A recently added shower room also allows for changing clothes and washing muddy feet and paws.

Each morning, before breakfast, Clara lights the wood-burning stove, sending a comforting drift up through the house via the wide bare-wooden stairs. The stairs lead up to the generous hall and then ►





**LEFT** The summerhouse veranda hangs over a wild pond with water iris and rushes.

**BELOW** Just big enough for a sofa and table and chair, the summerhouse makes for a quiet retreat.

**BELOW LEFT** Furnished with Lloyd Loom vintage painted chairs and tables, the conservatory runs along the east side of the house, with views to the sea.











**LEFT** Quilts and pillows in Misty Blue from The White Company complement the white canopied wooden four-poster bed from Heal's in the main bedroom. The dressing table is a family heirloom. Walls are painted in Dimity by Farrow & Ball. Woodwork is in Pearl Colour by Papers and Paints.





*Looking out over the gardens to the sea beyond, there is a timeless atmosphere to the house*

**ABOVE** The en suite bathroom was converted from a dark, unused back bedroom. The same colours link it to the bedroom next door.

**ABOVE RIGHT** An old French bed and an unusual side table were found locally. The walls are painted in Blue Ground by Farrow & Ball. The original shutters stand out in white.

upwards still to the first floor with its pretty bedrooms. The large drawing room has an outside veranda, giving space for lunches and suppers high up above the gardens. These rooms are lit by large windows with wooden window seats and French windows to the outside space with views of the sea. “Looking out over the gardens to the sea beyond, there is a timeless atmosphere to this part of the house,” muses Clara.

Prolific at finding and using architectural salvage, Clara and her local builder built a summerhouse from reclaimed wood in a corner of the lower garden. This is a pretty single room with doors opening onto a narrow veranda, perched over a wildlife pond. “A perfect place for writing, sleeping and waking to

witness the sun rising over the sea.” The gardens surround the house with many mature trees that were planted when the house was built. The island has a microclimate, so tree ferns, mimosas and variegated myrtle flourish here. A keen gardener, Clara has added a fine selection of species of hydrangeas. After clearing a large unused and overgrown area, she also planted a small orchard of unusual fruit trees such as medlar, mulberry and island varieties of apple.

At the top of her ‘most favourite’ list is the fact that the house is tucked away in its own grounds and yet within easy reach of the village. “I love the sense of being set apart and being private,” she says, “and yet the sea is just a five-minute walk away.” ■



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A Belfast sink was installed below the window in the kitchen to make the most of the light. The blinds were custom-made from a now discontinued Lewis & Wood fabric.



# FLIGHT *of* FANTASY

A love of nature and a passion for Victoriana helped Somerset-based artist Victoria Moseley to feather her nest in fairytale style

FEATURE AND STYLING RHIANNON BATTEN PHOTOGRAPHS SIMON MCBRIDE







Many people talk of nesting when they buy a home, but few can embrace the analogy like Victoria Moseley. After she bought her Victorian terraced house in Bath a decade ago, she discovered that, in the 1950s, a previous occupant of the property had been commissioned to build an aviary for the Queen Mother. Local craftsman Ernie Hathway had built the structure – a giant Gothic birdcage – in what is now the garden.

Approaching Victoria's house today, this sounds a little fanciful. The glade-like garden hardly seems big enough to host a flock of hummingbirds. Enter her gingerbread-like cottage, however, and the story seems entirely plausible. Spiked with the Indian scent of *nag champa* and streaked with sunlight, the property has a palpable sense of the fairytale about it. Part paean to Victoriana, part Gustavian fantasy, it mixes pale pastel paintwork and embroidered fabrics with gloriously blousy flowers, porcelain jugs and precious silk fans. The effect is almost Narnian, but Victoria shrugs. "Good design is like a tuning fork – when you walk into a space you know when you're in sync."

A former paint finisher and interior designer, Victoria now runs her own business, Miss Havisham's Attic, designing greetings cards for the likes of Liberty. The cards combine vintage French photographs with elements of the natural world – and are a creative outlet for Victoria's interest in spirituality, ecclesiastical art and Victoriana. Her latest project is the Vintage Wisdom Oracle, a deck of beautifully illustrated cards to be used for daily spiritual guidance. Rich with symbolic detail, from mythological muses to floriography (the Victorian attribution of meanings to flowers), the cards are a reflection of her home in miniature. In a nod to both, she says, "One of the mistakes ►







#### CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT

Light, leafy and quiet, Victoria's studio is an ideal workspace for designing her delicate, vintage-inspired cards and gifts.

The sitting room is painted a warm taupe shade. Striped wallpaper, 'Kia' by Harlequin, adds a contemporary note.

The kitchen cabinets are one of the few items Victoria painted an off-the-peg colour: Farrow & Ball's French Gray.

Victoria's collection of vintage china and Victoriana extends to the kitchen.

In the courtyard garden Victoria's penchant for all things vintage is represented by a wrought-iron table and chair set; similar can be found at Black Country Metalworks, which has a wide range of metal garden furniture.







**ABOVE** A small selection of Victoria's ever-rotating collection of treasures: a vintage wash jug, an antique French baptism box and an unusual jewellery box, trimmed with silk and etched glass, reside on the dressing table.

**RIGHT** Clever customising is one of Victoria's signature design traits. In the guest bedroom, a painted metalwork shelf acts as a canopy over the bed, whilst a length of voile with a tree motif in its centre has been used as a sheer blind.

people make with a house is to think 'this is me'. You make this grand statement but, actually, people change. Since I've gone from interior design to art, my rooms have become more like my cards, embellished with little details."

Despite these dainty trimmings, the house is not an entirely feminine zone. As well as her Parson's Jack Russell, named Friendly, Victoria shares the space with her partner, Mike, a tree surgeon and writer, who, at six-foot-tall with flaxen hair, has an air of the Viking about him. Trawling vintage fairs and salvage yards is a shared passion, one that has also shaped the house.

Indeed, the two-up, two-down's current incarnation is very different from how it appeared during Victoria's first few years there. Then, she had worked on so many interior design jobs that she needed to drown out the ensuing visual noise, "I decided to paint the rooms white and live in the empty space for a while."

First, there was structural work to be done. Downstairs, the floorboards had become rotten and needed replacing. In the kitchen, ugly fitted units and a giant fridge were taken out; in went MDF ►







*“Colour is so much fun.  
I change paint colours  
like I change frocks”*

**LEFT** The painted peacock chair in the master bedroom came from one of Victoria's friends, who is an antiques dealer ([bellebrocante.com](http://bellebrocante.com)). Victoria often changes the items on display in her home, "I'm always falling back in love with things. If you cease to appreciate what you have in a room,

you should either move those pieces around or get rid of them."

**BELOW** One of Victoria's standout DIY projects was the canopy above the master bed. Sourced from an antiques dealer in Cheshire, she painted it white and draped it with bobble-fringed fabric to create a wonderful, timeless romantic look.







**ABOVE** The guest bedroom, dubbed the 'princess suite', is often used by Victoria's niece. The mirror was created from an old picture frame. Below it stands a console and a collection of vintage linens; an elegant disguise for a radiator (for similar, visit [cloudsandangels.com](http://cloudsandangels.com)). The floral bedspread was an eBay find; the matching curtains it came with were used to make the headboard.

cupboards that Victoria painted. To keep the room light, she decided not to re-install head-height units, preferring to store crockery and linen in a customised wardrobe in the adjacent utility room. She also relocated the sink to underneath the window.

Upstairs in the bathroom, the bath was also moved below the window and swapped for a double-ended tub. "I love that bath," laughs Victoria. "Even on a cold day, to lie in the warmth, with the candles lit, the window open and the blue sky peeping over the tops of the neighbouring buildings... It's just lovely."

In the bedrooms, period fireplaces were reinstated and the floorboards painted. As with the rest of the house, Victoria mixed her own paint colours here, blending tins to get the tints she wanted.

"Colour is so much fun," she says. "I change paint colours like I change frocks. In the sitting room I was inspired by a visit to the South of France. That really rich taupe with white is everywhere there. I love it. It's really warm, so I made a conscious choice to make that

a winter room, with heavier colours on the walls, but really light floorboards. When the fire's lit on a winter's evening the room comes into its own."

In contrast to this, Victoria describes the master bedroom as a spring-summer room. Walls are a custom-blended blue-grey and vintage furniture has been painted a chalky, off-white. On the bed, an antique lace tablecloth is used as a bedspread.

There is more in the attic, too. "I see my home as a work in progress," Victoria explains. "One day something will go up and something else will come down, and that's how it works."

Fittingly, many of those pieces are birds. A repeating symbol in Victoria's house, little winged creatures perch elegantly over mirrors, flock around antique candlesticks and hover over doorways. Though she only heard about the aviary built by Ernie Hathway after she had decorated the house, for Victoria, the connection was no surprise. "In mythology birds are often depicted as messengers," she reveals. ■





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# AT HOME WITH *Monica Vinader*

A coastal view, her collection of stones and the smell of rosemary are just some of the things that make a home for jewellery designer Monica Vinader





**T**he jeweller Monica Vinader set up her business – a semi luxury jeweller that bridges the gap between Accessorize and Tiffany – just seven years ago, yet, last year alone, it turned over £14 million. Monica is the creative vision, in charge of designing the accessible fine jewellery. Originally from San Sebastián in Spain, from the age of 16 she was educated in England. Today, she runs her business from Norfolk and lives in the area with husband Nick and eight-year-old daughter, Scarlett.

#### Can you describe your home for me?

We live near Brancaster in Norfolk, in a converted farm building that dates back to the 11th century. It's also got additions that date right up to the 19th century, so it's a real mishmash, but it does have a lot of history. It was a Templar building originally, and I love that part of time. There's a pond and a fairly wild garden with fields all around. The location is what's really fabulous, as we have a view of the sea and it's within an official Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### Your business is also based in Norfolk, which is quite unusual for an international jewellery company...

It is. The business is inside the Holkham Estate, on a farm of converted barns, with low-slung oak beams, called Longlands. It's rather magical. I'm definitely not complaining.

#### Why did you settle in Norfolk?

When I first met my husband, 20-odd years ago, Norfolk was one of the first places he brought me to. His family had a house here; he's always been a Norfolk person. We used to visit and, eventually, we thought we'd give it a go. He's always had a love affair with the area, and that's now rubbed off on me. Today, we've lived here for 17 years.

#### What's a favourite room in your house?

Our sitting room. It was a garden that was joining the old forge and the house, which we've converted. It was joined by a beautiful listed wall, and my mother-in-law designed the rest – she's an architect. It looks out straight to the pond and, although it's north facing, the view is amazing. There's a lot of light because there are skylights everywhere and one wall is glass. It's very much the hub.

The interior is very casually done and not formal in any way. In fact, the whole house is informal.

#### How would you describe your interior style?

It's very personal to me, comfortable and liveable. I think it feels very loved.

#### Would we know you're a jewellery designer if we came to your house?

Possibly. There are lots and lots of books on jewellery, and I collect stones and minerals. There are rows and rows of pebbles from the beach, so you'd definitely think I was a collector of stones. I think you'd 'get' that it's a house belonging to someone in design and fashion.

#### Who has the most say when it comes to interiors – you or your husband?

It's tricky, because Nick has a very strong opinion and does have a very good eye. We do fight over things quite often; he gets certain things whilst I get others. He's very good at hanging pictures and he chose most of the paint colours in the house. As mentioned, his mother is an architect and his grandfather was, too, so he's got a good understanding of space. Probably better than me, in fact.

#### Is there an underlying colour running through your home?

It's mostly light as I find English homes can be rather dark. In our home, for example, some of the rooms don't have masses of windows. We do have a very dark-red terracotta bathroom but there's a lot of light in that room, so it allows for the colour hue. The small dining room is a very dark pink and it's north facing, so it's not super light, but somehow it works.

#### Can you describe some favourite pieces of artwork?

We've got a lot of engravings and quite a few paintings by Cecil Touchon, who we really like. We've got fine art by Paul Stevenson mixed in with Mexican artwork, framed travel photography and a lot of beautiful, framed maps that my husband's collected over the years. There's also lots of carved wooden fish – modern and antique – because he fishes a lot.

#### Do you have any family heirlooms?

I hate that word; it sounds so formal! I've got a lot of beautiful things that my mother and father passed on to me. They had an antiques and auction-house business in Spain when I was growing up, and so had lovely things, from jewellery and objects to gorgeous furniture. I've got a Syrian inlaid chest in my dining room and a fabulous candelabrum that got passed down – I love

both. My mother-in-law, over the years, has given us gorgeous little boxes and beautiful ceramic jugs she's bought for us. Between our families we've got really lovely things, but they aren't necessarily worth a lot of money. They're just sentimental.

#### What's been a big influence for you in the home?

My mother. She was forever re-shuffling things around and coming into my room when I was a child and taking away a desk and saying: "I'm giving you a new one because I've sold this." We always lived with an ever-changing interior that always looked as nice as the last one. You learn to become less precious about things and appreciate things whilst you've got them. She had a very fresh take on how you could mix things. When I was young, she started buying twenties and thirties art deco, which no one was buying 30 years ago. She would mix it in with Victorian and 1950s Danish furniture, which no one understood at the time. She had guts when it came to the interior and her attitude was: 'If you love it, then it fits in.' Her approach has rubbed off on me.

#### Do you have any memorabilia from your travels dotted around your home?

Hundreds. Sometimes I think we have far too much stuff. My husband and I worked and travelled in the travel industry – Nick still does – so I've lived in South-America, Mexico and the Bahamas. Over the years, we've collected beautiful crafts from Mexico, turtle skulls we've found on the beach in the Bahamas, and huge carved sculptures from temples in India.

#### What does your house smell like?

We've got a lot of huge rosemary bushes, so I cut a lot of rosemary and put fresh-cut branches – as you would flowers – in vases all year round. You would never find fake flowers in my home, or anything dried.

#### Finally, what should no English home be without?

A fireplace. Warmth aside, I love the way a fireplace instantly makes a room cosy. We often light our fire on a chilly night in the summer, just to get the ambience it instantly creates. It does to a room the same as flowers; it makes a room come alive. ■  
[monicavinader.com](http://monicavinader.com)







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# STYLE INSPIRATION

Prints with naive charm | Lighting elegance | Insights of furniture design



## BRIGHT AWAKENING

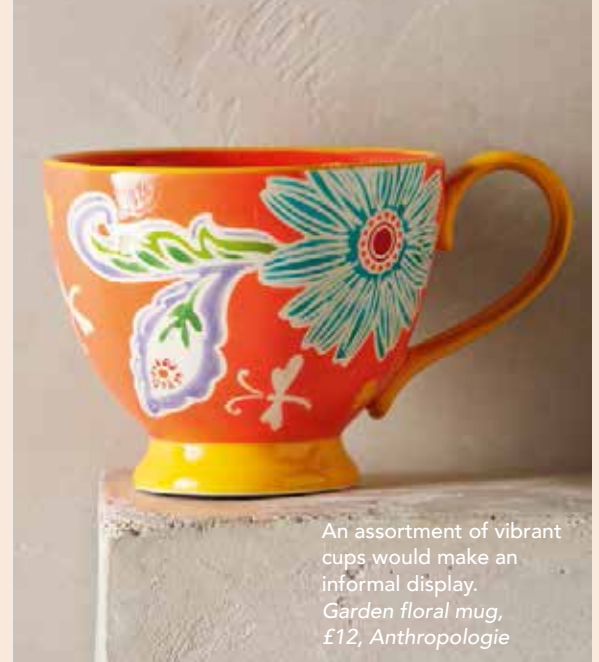
The bedroom is usually associated with darkness and retreat – a restful, cossetting place in which to unwind and relax. However, following a night of blissful repose, there can be nothing more energising than awakening in a beautiful sun-filled space. The early twentieth-century poet, Goethe, wrote that yellow was the colour closest to light; in its highest purity, it has a serene and softly exciting character. Here, the ceiling has been painted in a rich egg-yolk hue creating an uplifting vision with which to greet the day. Gorgeous bedlinen strewn with exuberant blowsy roses adds a further layer of optimism.

*Julianne double-duvet cover, £99; Julianne Oxford pillowcases, £35 a pair, all Christy*









An assortment of vibrant cups would make an informal display.  
Garden floral mug, £12, Anthropologie

## Home MAKING

Set a homely, comforting tone with artistic prints and patterns in rich, friendly bursts of colour

Personality in choice of buys gives a home heart and soul. Homes that evolve over time with new discoveries, nestling alongside treasured possessions, tell the tales and tastes of the owner, rather than matching perfectly. So, an approach that does not take itself too seriously by being fussy and matchy, but instead layers colour and pattern, imbues a welcoming and honest sense of character. Seek out artistic, yet naive prints and motifs that have a homespun flavour; be playful with a joyous palette of hues, which bring life to a room. The overall finish can still be smart, and offset with traditional furniture and crisply painted walls, but it is these few relaxed, decorative flourishes that make one feel 'at home'.

### LEFT Sweetly patterned

Cushions are a forgiving way to display an eclectic mix of colours and patterns, with a collection that can be added to over the years as a particularly lovely one is discovered. The blend can be changed to suit the season and one's mood. These cushions from Emma Bridgewater, created in collaboration with Sanderson, feature patterns from Bridgewater's distinctive tableware. Used collectively, the result is harmoniously mismatched and inviting. Cushions, from £39.95, Emma Bridgewater and Sanderson ▶





“There is nothing like staying at home for real comfort.”

From *Emma*, by Jane Austen

**ABOVE** Practically perfect  
Hand-block prints have a truly artisan quality and often can be deemed as unique, since slight variations and charming imperfections occur during the print process. These colourful cotton cloths have a water-resistant matt finish making them ideal for use as tablecloths or for dining room chairs. *Pink floral oilcloth, £24 a metre, Lulu & Nat*

**LEFT** Sunny side up  
Floors can be a great surface upon which to inject colour without being overbearing. A sunny yellow tile with a simple but

effective pattern is rejuvenating, however still feels smart and chic, with the rest of the kitchen in monochrome. Yellow tiles on the walls would have had a more dominant effect.

*Paccha by Popham Design collection, Rings in Yolk and Milk, £120 for a sq metre, Ann Sacks*

**RIGHT** Flower power  
This riot of colour and pattern is triumphant and confident. The rest of the decor benefits from being more restrained but any of the colours can be picked out to add extra punch in accessories. *Madrague, £187 a metre, Zimmer + Rohde* ▶









#### TOP RIGHT Personal stylist

For a chic twist on home making, commission a bespoke fabric. It is a particularly lovely idea for a bedroom, which is a more private, intimate space and should be truly reflective of personal tastes. Vanderhund offer bespoke designs and colourways in hand-embroidery, such as this design created with Kit Kemp and used in a suite in the Covent Garden Hotel. Visit their studio on Portobello Road.

#### RIGHT Shades of interest

It is always a joy to discover beautiful products, lovingly designed and made on a small scale. The story they tell enriches the story of one's own home. We discovered Lottie Day online. This Norfolk-based artist produces illustrations that are screen-printed onto canvas to adapt into a range of handmade products for home and garden. From tea towels and aprons to bags and deck chairs, each item is brought to life with depictions of flora and fauna. We love the rich colours of the Dahlia lampshade.

Lampshades, £80, Lottie Day ■





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A real sense of drama is provided by this pendant light from Rose Uniacke. The light hangs like a jewel from a substantial chain and encompasses several floors. Beautiful by day and even more enchanting at night.





## FINISHING TOUCHES: MOOD LIGHTING

Lighting is rarely given the appreciation it deserves. Mary Carroll highlights sympathetic designs for an essential element that can add a little drama and bring a room scheme to life

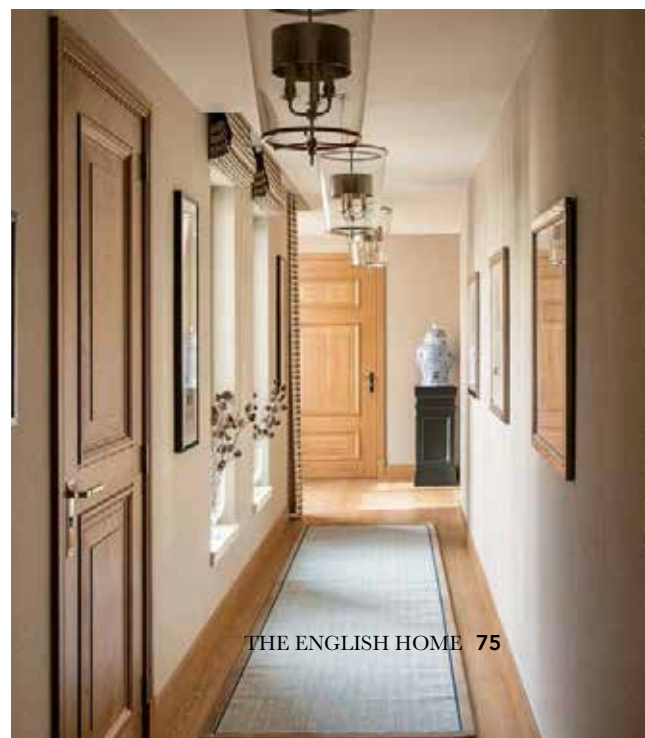
**L**ighting has a big part to play in bringing a home to life, so it is only right that we take time to consider its design and how it will integrate into the overall scheme of a room.

Well lit rooms are made up of many lighting elements, not least daylight. There is so much pleasure to be had from sun-filled rooms. At night we require just the same amount of pleasure from the lighting effects we create. Overhead pendant lights, such as chandeliers, give overall brightness, whereas task lighting, such as a standard lamp, make reading an easy affair. Table lamps are favoured for the soft glow they bring to a room, adding much needed light to dark corners or highlighting treasured possessions and photographs. Wall lights add to the atmosphere, but also have their own part to play in creating attractive wall features.

It can be surprisingly hard to track down beautiful lighting at an 'affordable' price. As with many things, it is hard to get the full effect until it is well and truly installed, which can sometimes make returning items problematic. So, it is important to try to get lighting right the first time around and to really give it the consideration it deserves. Size is the first crucial element to consider, and a great many people often choose lighting that is too small – it is having the confidence and knowledge, which interior designers have built up over the years through experience, to make a suitable choice. ▶

**RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM** This bathroom, designed with attention to detail by Louise Jones, displays lighting chosen for all the right reasons. Discreet spots are positioned over key areas, whilst wall lights add a sense of grandeur to the vanity unit.

Interior designer Douglas Mackie uses his skill and experience to select different lights within a scheme. Using shades in the same colour and finish creates synergy. In this Chelsea apartment, Sims Hilditch created a multi-layered and welcoming hallway. The three pendant lanterns are a nod to traditional hallway lighting and provide a warm glow without being too harsh.





It is very difficult to imagine how much space a chandelier is really going to take until it is hung, so try out the size with a simple model made out of card to emulate the measurements. Get someone carefully balanced on a ladder to hold the model where you are hoping to position the chandelier to see whether it is taking the amount of space originally imagined. This simple test can work very well with all sorts of lighting, particularly wall lights when it is necessary to gain a feel for how they are going to look and the projection of the light fitting. It is surprising how much space a wall light takes up, particularly if shades are involved.

For many interior designers, devising a lighting plan that does not require a pendant light within a scheme is preferable. But, if there is no way around it, be sure to include other forms of lighting, too, to give your needs and the design concept more flexibility. Always consider the versatility of a dimmer switch for pendant lights as this can so easily change the amount of light and mood within a room. If the opportunity arises to alter lighting circuits, having a pendant light on one dimmer switch and task lights on another is the best route for a successful lighting plan.

Pendant lights work well in a kitchen or family room. Bringing the light closer to the table with a longer chain or cord can create a more intimate effect for evening time, and, if the table seats 12 people or more, a pair of pendant lights create double the impact.

If a chandelier has been installed and the candle bulbs produce distracting shafts of light around the room, small lampshades might be the answer, although this very much depends on the style of the light fitting.

Shades will also soften the amount of light and add a feature to the finished concept.

Entrance halls can benefit from a pendant or chandelier cleverly filling the ceiling space, whilst creating a focal point as an introduction to a home. Choosing an important piece of lighting needs to be considered in relation to other elements, be it the style of the front door and the home as a whole, or the ironmongery on adjoining internal doors and your flooring choice. Everything needs to sing together.

Never underestimate the space a table lamp takes. This can be a hard one to get right when buying the base and shade separately, although this allows for versatility when choosing a preferred shade to suit the size of the base. A table lamp with a shade that is far too small leads to an out-of-proportion effect, which feels very uncomfortable and shifts the easy feeling in a room.

If using a pair of identical table lamps within a scheme always place them on the same level, as this works better on the eye. Also avoid pairing two different styles of table lamps on the same level, as this creates a sense of imbalance. That said, different table lamps can add interest to a room, so choosing a selection of materials for the bases gives the impression that the room has carefully come together over time.

Filtered light is always preferable, so test shades using a lit table lamp in the shop or showroom before making a purchase. If the

shade is to be used for a reading table lamp it will need to let as much light through as possible. For other table lamps, dotted around the room to create atmosphere, a more opaque shade would be very suitable. Layering of texture and colour produces a beautiful effect in interiors, and this is worth remembering when choosing lampshades. Combining several shades made from the same fabric might cause a room scheme to have the overtones of a hotel foyer, so look for subtle differences in texture and shade, unless a uniformed appearance is definitely required. Pleated or card shades have a classic look, whilst parchments are more modern in feel. Having shades lined with silver or gold helps to generate an even warmer effect.

Standard lamps work particularly well if a table lamp is required but will not be used for reading. Throughout his projects – and indeed his own home – William Yeoward uses very discreet hooded standard lamps in brass and nickel, which just skim the top of armchairs and sofas so as not to detract from the flow of the room. There is nothing worse than sitting in a chair with an overbearing standard light blinding you, so be aware of how lighting can affect not only the room, but anyone sitting in it. A traditional upright standard lamp is very useful in bringing light to a redundant corner and can be particularly flattering in a dining room setting, where creating subtle pools of light

and essential mood enhances the dining experience.

Wall lights have such an important role to play. They do need to be considered early on in a room project to avoid having to track wires through decorated walls. Wall lights need

to relate to the space and the surface to which they are to be fixed. They do work well either side of a large piece of artwork or, in the case of bathrooms, either side of a mirror. So, think through the decorative elements early on. Small, discreet designs also work particularly well on cabinetwork, adding a warm glow to wood or painted surfaces, but again need to be thought through at the design stage of any cabinet making. They are particularly useful in cottages with low ceilings, where pendants would just not be appropriate. The choice of wall light design will often depend on how many are to be used within a room. More than two sets and you will need them to quietly be present, whilst a pair in a dining room as a foil for other lighting can add drama and a focal point. Whatever you do, do not choose them in isolation of everything else. They need to feel at home in their environment, otherwise they just stick out like a sore thumb, so relate the materials to those in the room for a harmonious effect.

This series hopes to tap into the clever ideas designers adopt to create interiors that are timelessly successful. I have seen many designers use slimline picture lights atop bookshelves to bring another clever element of light into a room and to accentuate one of the most beautiful accessories in a home – books. As one of the key elements that make a house feel like home, highlighting books with an additional downlight seems the right way to give them the status they truly deserve. ►

*There is nothing worse than sitting  
in a chair with an overbearing  
standard light blinding you*





**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** Interior designer Hugh Leslie artfully chooses a highly individual table lamp to create a thoughtful composition using a collection of attractive objects. The floor lamp is at just the right level for comfortable reading. Bringing a stylish yet utilitarian effect to this Plain English kitchen, a pendant light hung at the right level can provide light just where it is needed. Kitchens from £40,000.

The pairing of key pieces is a device interior designers use to create a sense of calm through duplication. Here, Katharine Pooley positions a pair of captivating floor lamps to give height and a sense of presence. Thorp interior design created this elegant manor house dining area with a blend of contemporary and heritage-inspired pieces: including a striking candelabra for gentle candlelight during evening entertaining.







# Lighting Resources

Create *ambiance* with *Mary Carroll's* suggested sources of inspiration

## LEFT TO RIGHT

Lighting does not always have to be obvious; unlit, this pair of fluted table lamps might be mistaken for vases.

*Novara alabaster uplighter*, £792, *Vaughan*

Shades in all shapes and sizes can be custom-made at Copper & Silk.

Hand carved from wood, this classically decorative lamp sits well within ornate or pared-back schemes. *Sorano standing lamp*, £170; *Ivory Silk tapered drum shade*, £106, both *Pooky*

**W SITCH & COMPANY** An extraordinary lighting company dealing with renovation, wiring and rewiring, antiques and reproduction. They will source and have special items custom-made from hand painted candle light sleeves to elaborate ceiling plates.

[wsitch.co.uk](http://wsitch.co.uk)

**POOKY** Pleated shades in lovely fabric prints are an inspired way to introduce more colour into a simple room scheme. This company has a very good collection with well-priced, stylish lamp bases.

[pooky.com](http://pooky.com)

**COPPER & SILK** Small shades for chandeliers are not easy to track down, and if you are looking for just the right colour, having them custom-made could be the answer. Copper & Silk offer a 3-week lead time and a comprehensive range of shapes to choose from.

[copperandsilk.com](http://copperandsilk.com)

**I & JL BROWN** Their lighting collection may be somewhat on the small side, but there is always enough to find something stunning, especially when it comes to their pendant lights. The Kings Road showroom

holds The Visual Comfort Lighting Gallery, with creations from international designers on show.

[brownantiques.com](http://brownantiques.com)

**RICHARD TAYLOR DESIGNS** Everything about this lighting collection celebrates design, proportion and attention to detail.

[richardtaylor designs.co.uk](http://richardtaylor designs.co.uk)

**GP & J BAKER** The latest elegant furniture and accessory collection from this fabric house in Chelsea Harbour, London, is only available through the showroom. The table lamps are particularly beautiful.

[gpandjbaker.com](http://gpandjbaker.com)

**TYSON LONDON** For a different and special selection of table lamps in stunning glass and ceramic, this company presents a comprehensive collection.

[tyson.london](http://tyson.london)

**ASTRO LIGHTING** A smart collection of discreet lights for pictures and for highlighting bookshelves, available in a variety of sizes and finishes.

[astrolighting.co.uk](http://astrolighting.co.uk)



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image: Shoal286 shown in a private residence on the east coast of England


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# BY DEFINITION: WALLPAPER

Whether for a statement wall or an all-over effect, wallpaper endures as a powerful decorative choice. With so many varieties on offer, here is a brief introduction to how each is made.

## HAND BLOCK PRINTING

Block printing is a traditional method involving the carving of wooden, metal or linoleum print blocks (usually one for each colour) and pressing them sequentially along the length of the paper. This technique is extremely labour intensive, as the colouring and print alignment is all done by hand. Following the final pressing, these papers may be touched up or even coloured by hand.

## SURFACE PRINTING

This is the oldest printing method still in use today. Designs are carved into cylinders, which are then coated with ink and pressed onto the paper. These machines lay down large quantities of ink, which means the edges blur slightly, consequently, surface printing is not as crisp as some other methods.

Surface printers can have between 12 and 20 print stations, each applying a different colour as the paper passes through, so they are well suited for multi-coloured patterns.

Flexo (flexographic) printing is a variation on surface printing using engraved rubber cylinders or rollers, which act like a rubber stamp. This method uses less ink and, therefore, has a sharper finish. Improved technology means that flexo can now replicate fine gravure printing.

## GRAVURE (ROTOGRAVURE) PRINTING

Also known as 'intaglio', this method uses an engraved cylinder to transfer the image to paper. However, the design is recessed on the cylinder instead of raised. The ink collects in the recessed pockets and is absorbed by the paper as it passes over the cylinder. Because it only takes four transparent overlapped colours to make up most colours in the spectrum (four-colour process), this method enables unlimited colour and pattern choice. Most of the wallpapers that imitate the look of realistic

objects, art or photography are printed by the gravure method.

## SCREEN PRINTING

This method uses stencils to transfer the design onto a frame of stretched silk or similar synthetic fabric. Paint is applied to the frame and penetrates areas of the screen not blocked by the resistant stencil pattern. Several colours can be added along a long, flat printing bed and, using separate stencils, it is possible to build up a design using successive layers. Screen printing may be done by hand, which is slow and costly; more commonly it is automated, when it is called flatbed screen printing.

## ROTARY SCREEN PRINTING

This is an automated form of hand screen printing. A hollow cylindrical screen is created with tiny openings where the unblocked areas on a silk screen would be found. The screen is wrapped around a repeatable cylinder, and inks are applied from inside the cylinder. Through the use of a number of printing stations, a complex design can be built up. As the colours are dried between stations, colours can be overlapped or overlaid without showing through – although transparent inks may be used to create this effect. Rotary screen printing produces vibrant opaque colours with crisp, well-defined edges. ►



**ABOVE LEFT** Barneby Gates' papers are surface printed using rotary rollers. "The inks used are thicker and give a beautiful hand-painted feel," says Vanessa Barneby. *Pineapple in charcoal*, £78 for a 10m roll

**ABOVE RIGHT** At a printed width of 134cm, this design by decorative muralist Flora Roberts forms part of Lewis & Wood's growing collection of wide-width wallpapers. *Doves in Summer Blue*, £56.40 a metre



Botanical designs often look best at a slightly oversized scale. The graphic line drawing of trailing florals in Solaine by Sanderson, £58 a roll, echoes an archive Indienne block-print design.







## LITHOGRAPHIC PRINTING

Lithography is based on the chemical repellence of oil and water. Originally, designs were drawn on limestone with greasy ink or wax crayons. The stone was saturated with water, then the design was printed onto the paper using greasy ink, which adhered only to the drawing, whilst being repelled by the wet parts of the stone. Modern lithographic printing methods use the same principles but using aluminium drums. The process produces crisp, startling images with beautiful colour accuracy.

## FLOCK AND BEAD

Adhesive is printed onto pre-coloured wallpaper, and then either a nylon fibre or acrylic bead sprinkled over to form a luxurious raised pattern effect.

## DIGITAL PRINTING

This new method creates a startling, photographic effect and allows for unlimited flexibility, including the ability to recreate old wallpapers and create bespoke wallpapers using photographs, unique graphic designs or stock images.

## EMBOSSSED PAPERS: LINCRUSTA AND ANAGLYPTA

Lincrusta is a deeply embossed wallcovering created by Frederick Walton (who also patented linoleum flooring) in the 1870s. Made from a paste of gelled linseed oil and wood flour spread onto a paper base, then rolled between steel rollers, one of which is embossed with the



**FAR LEFT** The strié effect of this paper by Little Greene is achieved using a horsehair brush. Gilded edges are printed on top. *Cavendish Stripe in Brush Blue*, £66.50 a roll

**LEFT** Brian Yates' range of textured wallcoverings includes grasscloth, bamboo and sisal. *Orion (ORI5504)*, 91cm wide, £34.25 a metre

**BELOW** A gravure process is used to achieve the raised-ink effect of this pretty damask paper. *Vintage Damask wallpaper*, £32.95 a roll, Galerie



pattern, it gradually hardens over many years making for a very strong and durable, washable surface, often mimicking ornate plasterwork or architectural features. It is designed to be painted either with oil-based or water-based paint and may be gilded or glazed to add additional decorative interest. A cheaper version is Anaglypta, which is lighter and more flexible, but less durable.

## NATURAL MATERIALS

Natural fibres such as grasscloth, jute, sisal, seagrass, raffia and paper weaves add a textural three-dimensional quality to walls, with textures ranging from very fine to coarse. Individual stems or a woven mesh is glued by hand horizontally to backing paper, often in wider widths, frequently sold by the metre. Because of natural variations in colour, size and shape of the stems, such papers often give a panelled appearance. A proprietary adhesive is used and specialist hanging is advisable. Professional cleaning may also be necessary.

## PANELS AND WIDE-WIDTH PAPERS

The most common width for wallpaper is 52cm (20.5 inches), however, standard-width papers may range anywhere between 50.8 and 91cm (20 and 36 inches).

Wide-width papers measure from 68.5cm (27 inches) upwards, or in individual panels, sometimes with an option for bespoke sizes upon request. Panels and wider-width wallpapers offer the dual advantages of a reduction in the number of visible joins and the possibility of larger, more fluid and painterly designs, giving the impression of a hand-painted mural. The pattern on wider-width papers will usually be on a larger scale than on the standard-width design; manufacturers such as Lewis & Wood can scale the print on some of their designs to a bespoke size, dictated by the scale and proportions of the room in question. Wide-width wallpapers are often sold by the metre, untrimmed, and need to be hung by a professional decorator with hand-trimming experience. ■





# FROM SKETCH TO SCALE

Furniture design is considered in great detail, from aesthetic qualities through to practical requirements, to create exquisite functional pieces



Consider the graceful curves of a console, the shapely legs of a dining chair, the perfect height of a coffee table and the crisp angles of a bookcase; these did not occur by chance. Each angle, line and considerate detail was imagined, drawn and carefully created to result in a piece that is pleasing to the eye, but practical, comfortable and functional, too. Although requiring a great deal of creative thought, furniture design, at its heart, has to be about functionality. “It’s not a piece of art,” says furniture designer Justin Van Breda. “It has to have practical application. A sideboard needs drawers that can hold cutlery; the end use has to be considered.” Of course, these details are considered in balance with aesthetic ones, to create pieces that, despite their purpose, are also decorative features in their own right.

#### INSPIRATION AND IDEAS

The work of a furniture designer is incredibly varied, not only because of the sheer array of different pieces needed for each room in the house, but because many work on both in-house collections and offer a bespoke service, creating unique pieces that meet exacting requirements from clients. Van Breda is launching his newest range, The English Home collection, this autumn, and has spent the past year visiting country houses to gain inspiration. “I wanted to create something that was really English and referenced the Georgian era quite strongly,” he explains. “I am very line and shape sensitive and can be inspired by a line on a piece of fabric, a car or a lamppost. I always have a sketchbook in my bag and will do a quick line drawing of anything I like the look of.” Although he visited houses to get inspiration, he is not interested in copying or creating reproductions: “I often take photographs, which I print in black and white, so I can really focus on a line rather than the other details.” This process is similar to that of William Yeoward, who says he “might be inspired by travels, books or my own pieces, which I have been lucky enough to inherit or find in dusty corners of antiques shops. I will think of a shape and work up its proportions and take into consideration its purpose. These doodlings are sent to my design office to create a drawing, which I will tweak further.”

When working on a collection, designers must be sensitive to commercial requirements, too. Tim Gosling remarks that “It is much easier to work on a commission for a bespoke piece with a client than design a collection, as you have an immediate focus and starting point. When designing a collection you have to pre-empt an enormous range of people’s tastes and how it might be perceived by different people, in different countries – it becomes an incredible minefield.” Gosling reveals he tries to envisage a specific type of customer to help combat this problem. “I create a moodboard of ‘the world of X client’ to help me target visually what will work.” The moodboard will include architectural interiors, other pieces of furniture and even exteriors, to anchor the geographical location. “You can hold the design up and see if it fits into that world and you absolutely know whether it works, or, if it looks ridiculous, you know it’s wrong.”



**ABOVE** From Justin Van Breda’s English Home collection, the Benjamin bed features a head and foot in an ornate curved design, which replicates a simple squiggle Van Breda drew initially. **OPPOSITE** Van Breda was inspired by traditional country-house furniture but employed contemporary finishes, such as the William dining table in limed grey oak.

Both Van Breda and Yeoward work collaboratively with their teams to ensure collections will be commercially successful. “Collaboration is the most important thing in our design office, and we work with the sales team,” says Van Breda, “We might design ten console tables and everyone will draw and write on the designs and say they can or can’t sell it. We have a very open crit, which I always encourage, to narrow down the choice to the last three or four that everyone loves.” Yeoward concurs: “It is vital to have commercial awareness. You can make beautiful things endlessly, but they have to be made for the right price, and you have got to understand the client, what they want and need.” Deciding whether to make contemporary or classical pieces is another key decision. Designer Christopher Guy points out that “often, when you do something unexpected with a classical form it becomes ‘contemporary’. If, for instance, you were to paint a Chippendale chair in bright pink, it would immediately be seen as a contemporary piece, even though its form is still classic.” His designs focus on form, to create collections that transcend fashions. “The current trend is for contemporary furniture to be all about straight lines, and a masculine look, but we are all about curves with a more feminine feel. Whilst we stick to curvaceous, we make it in a timeless manner – so our pieces are not classic, ►





and not contemporary, they should fit all trends and none," he reveals. Gosling has written a book, entitled *Classic Contemporary: The DNA of Furniture Design* (available in October), where he found there are set patterns and proportions that occur in different periods of furniture. "There is a mathematical language that talks to you, and once you know the rules it is easier to play with them."

#### BESPOKE DESIGNS

With many handmade items of furniture, pieces can be customised to client requirements. A different finish could be applied or the height of a chair rescaled to suit. However, for a truly tailored specification, bespoke pieces are offered. Gosling relishes the opportunity to work on unique pieces for clients that are designed specifically for them, and to fit with the architecture of the building. "The great thing about the bespoke side is it really pushes the boundaries. You get stretched in different directions by fantastic clients who enjoy the process and will come to me with ideas and inspiration from things they have seen in Venice or St Petersburg. You might be working on a very classical piece or something very contemporary." The process for designing specifically for a client is, of course, much more focused, and begins with a consultation and discussion. "I draw whilst I talk with the client – I draw very fast," says Gosling. "That way, by the end of the meeting, we know visually what I am going to go away and work on, and we have signed off on exactly what the conversation has been about."

David Wilder, furniture designer at I & JL Brown explains he often goes to a client's home to measure up and take photographs. "I will do a drawing of the piece, free-hand, which I can lay over the photograph so the client can see what it will look like in

place," he says. A benefit of bespoke designs is the ability to get pieces made to fit an awkward space, or to be more comfortable to the owner. "We recently had a client where all the family are over six-feet tall, so we made sure there was plenty of leg room under the dining table," reveals Wilder. Gosling concurs: "You make something so it is completely and utterly comfortable for them. Of course, there needs to be a discussion about who exactly will use the piece, or share the piece, and if you have a very tall husband and a shorter wife then there needs to be debate to work out the ergonomics that will work best." Yeoward does note, however, that there needs to be a sense of scale and a relationship between different pieces of furniture and the room. "There is a rule of thumb to follow for seat and table heights and, although you can adjust for the client, you do have to bear in mind that the room is still a fixed size. You have to consider all of the elements together to create the right scale to work within the layout."



**TOP LEFT** Tim Gosling works on sketches whilst talking with clients.

**ABOVE** After an initial sketch, Gosling creates watercolours and full technical drawings using CAD, such as this plan for a console and mirror.

**LEFT** The finished piece. Gosling says he speaks with the craftsmen six to seven times a day, to ensure everything is going smoothly.



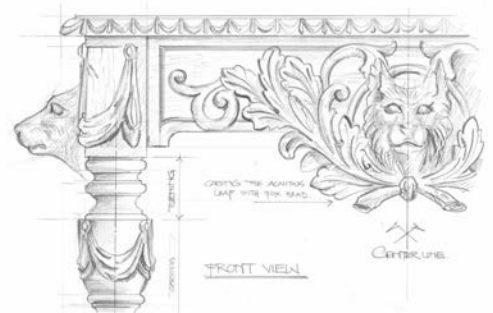


#### CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

A family dining table by I & JL Brown.

The Godwyn console by William Yeoward features a handsome fox head design. Below are the sketches and finished piece. The drawer is lined with marquetry that replicates a fabric design by Yeoward.

A watercolour sketch of a chaise and screen by Christopher Guy.



#### PRACTICAL CONCERNS

In both bespoke and collection pieces, ergonomics and other factors, such as being able to deliver and install a piece, have to be considered. "Access is 101," says Gosling. "We will do an access check and debate exactly how we will get it in. You have to make sure you can get a piece in and up or down stairs." This might mean having to make a piece in sections that can be assembled by the craftsman on site. "We had a client in Dubai who had an apartment on the 30th floor," recalls Wilder, "The table had to go up in a lift in lots of pieces and put together in the room. This is an extreme example, but it is possible." Functionality must be considered, too. "A bookcase must have shelves that are deep enough to hold the books required," says Wilder. Of course, the piece must also be sturdy and balance. "I am pretty good at knowing, by now, if something will stand up and support itself, even when I am just sketching an idea," asserts Van Breda. ►







## COMMISSIONING A PIECE

Often handmade pieces can be tailored to personal requirements, making a chair a little higher, a table a little wider, as desired. However, for a truly unique piece, bespoke designs are required. It is important to understand the process used by the designer and to ensure they understand what it is you want.

## CHOOSING A DESIGNER

Research designers and their portfolios. Although many will design a wide range of styles, it pays to know they can achieve the look desired or have similar designs to help you communicate exactly what is wanted. Recommendations from friends are always a good starting point, as is checking the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers website for members with Guild Marks, which reward quality and impart confidence.

## CLEAR IDEAS

Ensure the location for the piece is known: consider whether it needs to fit an awkward space and if it needs to complement other pieces. Have an understanding of the types of pieces you like and do not like. If the meeting is not taking place at home, take along pictures to give the designer a good sense of the rest of the room, as well as pictures of anything that might inspire designs.

## COSTS & BUDGET

It is also worth checking beforehand when payment is required. Some designers will do an initial rough sketch free of charge during consultation, but may ask for a deposit before technical drawings or watercolours are completed. Have a clear idea of the budget for the piece as this will impact design choices and finishes. More drawers, for example, will increase the final bill because of the extra work required.



## CREATION AND FINISHES

The preliminary sketches from designers – which can be just simple line doodles – are worked up into technical drawings, and samples might be produced for the client to choose materials. Although a designer might have a certain material in mind, the choice is generally made to complement the design after it has been completed. James Young, director of Archer & Smith reveals: “We balance what the overall desired look is, with ensuring longevity, stability of colour and practicality to suit the environment it is going into. For example, we are working on two very traditional pieces, for separate clients, in mahogany and walnut veneers to give the appearance of original, traditional furniture. However, because of modern heating – central heating, underfloor heating and air conditioning – we have to ensure the furniture will be stable, as the conditions are quite dry, so we might use a modern substrate.”

Finishes do not necessarily have to be traditional for classical pieces and contemporary for modern designs. Van Breda explains that he wanted to use woods that were used in the Georgian and early Victorian eras, such as rosewood, oak and mahogany, “but treated in a more contemporary way with different finishes.” Yeoward favours scrubbed whites and textured woods, and is passionate about adding interesting and unexpected details. “I like marquetry highlights for the interiors of cupboards and drawers.”

Finally, an open dialogue with the workshops is vital, with designers visiting and communicating with the craftsmen numerous times a day to ensure a design is working and being made exactly as they envisaged. ■

**ABOVE** This settle is from the main collection at I & JL Brown, but Wilder advises that these pieces can be customised to suit client requirements.

**ABOVE LEFT** Another watercolour by Christopher Guy, who favours the use of curvaceous shapes to create timeless designs.





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# Celebrating the essence of English style



This is the 15th anniversary year of the launch of *The English Home*. Here, we mark this milestone with a look at some past covers and future interiors stars

## RAISE A GLASS

Over the years, *The English Home* has evolved under the guardianship of three editors – Charlotte Coward-Williams, Sharon Parsons and current editor Kerry Harper-Cuss – as well as their talented teams. From the beginning, the title has enjoyed a wonderfully discerning readership on both sides of the Atlantic for its unique editorial blend, and has been delighted to work with some of the most prestigious names in the interiors and journalism professions.

We have featured homes of top designers, including Nina Campbell, Joanna Wood and Edward Bulmer, whilst we have also collaborated with others for colour masterclasses and expert advice, including Henrietta Spencer-Churchill, Nicky Haslam, David Linley, and Tricia Guild.

We have interviewed fine English talents from the worlds of stage, screen, dance, fashion, sport and business – from India Hicks, to Rosemund Pike, to Sophie Dahl, to Joanna Trollope, to Mary King, to Bruce Oldfield... We have also persuaded the most knowledgeable experts, such as Jane Churchill, William Yeoward, Sir Terence Conran and Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd, to share exclusive case studies of their work or resources from their Little Black Books.

Along with these established names, we have also celebrated and spotlighted rising talents, from Cox London, to Helen Amy Murray, to Hitomi Hosono... If only we had space to mention them all!

So here's a toast in thanks to all those who have generously worked with us in any capacity, and to all the readers and subscribers around the world who have read and enjoyed the magazine for years on end, and sent us countless letters and emails. We value your passion, your enthusiasm and your support enormously. Here's to the next 15 years.

The  
**ENGLISH  
HOME**









“When I had the pleasure of editing the magazine, I was renovating an 18th-century Dorset cottage, which meant I could fully identify not only with the title's spirit – celebrating the joys of the English home – but, of course, the readers who felt as passionately about their homes as I did. As an editor, I was constantly inspired by the beautiful homes we featured, and many of the ideas found their way into my own little country cottage. These days I live in Dubai, which could not be more different, but I often daydream about the English home I will return to one day... And, needless to say, the latest issue of *The English Home* is a regular treat, read here on my sunny balcony!”

**SHARON PARSONS, EDITOR 2006-2008**



“I congratulate The English Home on their 15th anniversary. In my view, the magazine has, during this period, continuously conveyed the epitome of English style and quality. Its strength is to illustrate and convey beautiful, realistic ideas from talented designers, individuals and companies, which we can apply to our own homes”

**HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL,  
SPENCER-CHURCHILL DESIGNS**

“It seems like yesterday we were planning the first ever issue of *The English Home*. Sir Peter and Lady Felicity Osborne kindly invited us to shoot a dinner with them at their country home for the front cover (see top left) The room was festooned with one of the fabrics from their company, Osborne & Little. We had a lovely day with them shooting and, after many late nights with the team, *The English Home* was born. I spent seven years nurturing my new baby, loving every second. I can't believe it all started 15 years ago – and I look forward to seeing how it will develop and grow over the next 15 years.”

**CHARLOTTE COWARD-WILLIAMS, LAUNCH EDITOR**



“We all LOVE the *The English Home* here at Kate Forman Designs! Always so beautifully styled with heavenly house features and full of inspiration and interesting ideas. Quality through and through!”

**KATE FORMAN**



“As an independent freelancer, one appreciates and values each and every client. I would be lying if I said I like them all the same, because there are some I like more than others. *The English Home* is right at the top of my affections, and the reason is that they are invariably kind, appreciative and courteous. It really is a pleasure to work with them, but there is more to the magazine than just nice people: they also produce a beautiful magazine every month, one which I feel proud to be published in. I also like the fact that they stick to their brief, which is to feature the best of English homes, and they mean 'English'.”

**ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL, INTERNATIONAL  
INTERIORS PHOTOGRAPHER**





# MAKING BRITAIN: Iconic names and future stars

Befitting *The English Home* mission statement to 'celebrate the essence of English style' we invite iconic British brands and associations to reveal the names they see as stars of the nation's design future

## Artistic eye

LULU LYTLE, OF SOANE BRITAIN,  
SELECTS CLAIRE DE QUÉNÉTAIN

Lulu Lytle is co-founder and creative director of Soane Britain – the much admired creator of handmade furniture, upholstery, lighting and fabric – and is a passionate advocate of British craftsmanship. Along with co-founder Christopher Hodsoll, she ensures that every Soane design is made in Britain in small workshops that excel in traditional crafts, such as iron forging, chair making, precision engineering, saddlery, weaving and hand-printing fabrics to Lulu's own designs. Lulu nominates French-born, but British-trained, fabric designer Claire de Quénétain as a star of the future, saying "I found Claire de Quénétain on Instagram – her work is joyful and unconstrained, with an original use of colour. It has an atmosphere with elements reminiscent of the Bloomsbury Group and Matisse. Her designs feel spontaneous and uncontrived, with a sense of her own identity. I'm delighted to see that Heal's has collaborated with her."

Claire de Quénétain trained at the Royal College of Art. Her Roomscapes collection was inspired by English and French gardens with compositions created using hand-painted, screen-printed and digital-printed techniques. She also collaborated with Heal's for its 1810 collection (cushion pictured).

[clairedequenetain.com](http://clairedequenetain.com); [soanebritain.co.uk](http://soanebritain.co.uk)



CLOCKWISE FROM  
ABOVE Claire de  
Quénétain worked  
with Heal's for its 1810  
collection with a fabric  
and range of cushions  
exclusive to the store.  
Lulu Lytle finds and  
works closely with  
artisans and craftsmen  
across Britain to  
design and create the  
exclusive luxury range  
for Soane Britain.  
Fabric designs from  
de Quénétain's  
second collection,  
entitled Panorama.  
French-born de  
Quénétain trained at  
the Royal College of  
Art in London.







## Shared Aesthetic

EDWARD TADROS, CHAIRMAN OF ERCOL, SPOTLIGHTS TEXTILE DESIGNER ELEANOR PRITCHARD

Founded in 1920 by Italian émigré Luciano Ercolani, the Ercol brand has long championed British manufacture and has collaborated with many significant names in British interior design, including Matthew Hilton, Russell Pinch and James Ryan. Today, Ercol remains a family-run business. It continues to produce its distinctive furniture range from its own factory at Princes Risborough, nestled in the beautiful Chilterns region, and yet sells products around the world, from Belgium to Australia to Japan. Here, chairman Edward Tadros (grandson of founder Luciano Ercolani) reveals a talent he admires.

"The person who has really struck me, recently, has been [textile designer] Eleanor Pritchard. She seems to have suddenly

appeared on my personal radar several times in quick succession. I am probably well behind the curve and she is probably well known to many. I have seen the 'Wharncliffe' fabric used on our chairs in Margaret Howell's shop and I love the Ripple and Square Peg cushions she does for Margaret Howell. We are just beginning production of our new Flow dining chair: designed for us by Tomoko Azumi, it has a bent beech frame and a solid beech seat. Tomoko would like us to try an upholstered version of the seat and, on her most recent visit to us here at the factory, she brought some samples of Eleanor's fabrics with her.

"I think these are lovely fabrics and Eleanor deserves considerable success because the designs are not only gentle and

beautiful they also have that indefinable aura of quality and integrity of design and material. Eleanor's fabrics seem, to me, to be thoroughly relevant to our times."

Pritchard says that she feels a strong affinity for the aesthetics and design philosophy of the mid-century era and a deep interest in vernacular British textiles.

"I see much of my work as a re-interpretation of these traditions and techniques for a contemporary audience." The patterns are her own but utilize weaving traditions and techniques, which date back hundreds of years.

Her work is available from Heal's and Margaret Howell, as well as her online shop. Her blankets have been sold around the world to 25 countries.

[eleanorpritchard.com](http://eleanorpritchard.com); [ercol.com](http://ercol.com)

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Each of Pritchard's projects or collections use high-quality yarns. First, she develops a moodboard and then, from this, a palette of pattern, texture and colour. Ercol's Windsor all purpose chair, from £315 each, shown here with Pritchard's Line and Signal blankets. Eleanor's studio is based at Cockpit Arts in London. All of the product range is created in Britain and much of it upon 'dobcross' shuttle looms at a small traditional mill in West Wales. Edward Tadros, chairman of Ercol, has worked in the family business for 42 years.





## *Authentic allure*

PHILIPPA PRINSLOO, HEAD OF HOME DESIGN AT JOHN LEWIS, CHOOSES HAMPSON WOODS

John Lewis, the much-loved retailer, has, amongst its many offerings, been a long-time supporter of British manufacture. All its fitted kitchens are made in the UK, it works with many UK-based upholsterers for its own brand furniture range, the John Lewis mattresses and divan bases are made to its own specifications in UK factories and its exclusive textile manufacturing company – Herbert Parkinson textiles and weaving, founded in Lancashire in 1934 – is one of the last remaining weaving mills in England. It designs and makes around 600,000 metres of John Lewis furnishing fabric every year. In addition, the company enjoys being involved in ‘craft pitch-up’ events, in which buyers meet with smaller-

scale makers and find new names to stock and support. “For the last craft pitch-up we advertised on the craft council website and at craft exhibitions and received over 500 applications to attend,” Philippa Prinsloo, head of home design, reveals. “We whittled this down to 20 names to attend a ‘match-making’ day.” It was at this event that she met the team behind Hampson Woods: carpenter/cabinet maker Jonty Hampson and designer Sascha Gravenstein. Together, the duo hand-produce small batches of wooden homeware from their Hackney-based studio for a range with an organic, tactile allure that magnifies the beauty of the natural wood. The handmade chopping boards, spoons and hanging racks are a delightful antidote to mass-produced items.

Hampson Woods places great importance on provenance and sustainability when sourcing its wood supplies and even works with London arbourists to utilise wood from fallen trees. Philippa expresses her admiration, “I absolutely love their pieces – very true, very specialist and they are incredibly refreshing to work with.” Hampson Woods sells direct from its own website and the range is also available from a limited number of top quality outlets, but with the backing of John Lewis they can reach a broader audience than ever. Other brands to benefit from John Lewis’ endorsement have included Sitting Firm and Dove Street Pottery (which created a limited range for the Oxford Street store). [hampsonwoods.com](http://hampsonwoods.com); [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOPLEFT** Jonty Hampson is a trained carpenter/cabinet maker. Hampson Woods insists on an ethically-sound supply chain – their website reveals that “happily, everyone from forester to finisher cares enough to know where each piece once had its roots”. John Lewis now stocks a range of Hampson Woods chopping boards. Philippa Prinsloo is head of Home Design at John Lewis. Hampson Woods workshop is based in Hackney in East London.



## Star spotting

ANDREA WARBURTON, FROM LIBERTY, HIGHLIGHTS OLIVIA SCOTT-TAYLOR

Liberty, the fine London emporium of quality products for fashion, home and beauty, hosts an annual 'Best of British Open Call' to draw designers, makers and craft artisans to showcase their products to the buyers at the store, with the potential of securing a retail relationship. Andrea Warburton, home buyer for gift and furniture at Liberty, is one of the key members of staff who participates. Here, she has chosen to highlight Olivia Scott-Taylor, from the most recent in-store event, as her rising star. She reveals, "We love Olivia's design, which is based on the mid-century, British school chair, retaining the classic retro look and functional style of the original, but built to suit modern dining requirements. The chair caught our attention when it was brought to the Open Call, presented in a branded hessian sack, sealed with a large ribbon at the top. This was such an original idea and it made the chair feel even more special when it was revealed. The range is entirely British designed and manufactured, which is a big selling point for us. The design, along with the brand, was an instant hit!" Warburton goes on to comment, "We are always on the lookout for cutting-edge products here at Liberty, and this chair is bang on trend with its mid-20th-century, utilitarian design, whilst the colour bands on the backrests give the range a subtle flair. The design can be customised with colours to suit evolving trends. Great price, exclusivity and a product that is sure to stand the test of time."

[oliviascott-taylor.com](http://oliviascott-taylor.com); [liberty.co.uk](http://liberty.co.uk)

### CLOCKWISE FROM

TOP Olivia Scott-Taylor's chairs take inspiration from the classic mid-century laminated ply and tube steel British school chair.

The chair comes in 19 variations, £165 each. The company is the vision of mother and daughter design duo Lesley Scott and Olivia Scott-Taylor.

Scott restyled an original mid-century chair for her kitchen and Scott-Taylor had the idea of designing and manufacturing their own chair in order to retain the classic retro look.

Liberty's Andrea Warburton.







**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT**

Pieces by award-winning cabinet-maker John Galvin.

Michelle Emmerson, CEO of Walpole.

Naomi Paul's V2 GLÜCK pendant shades, available in seven colours, from £1,254.

Paul's products are 100 per cent British made.

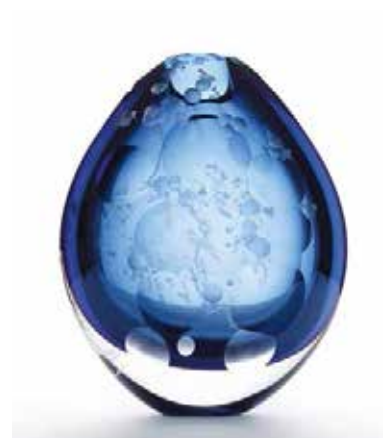
Her studio is best known for its lighting designs, which have been commissioned by high profile clients, such as Pullman Hotels and

Firmdale Hotels.

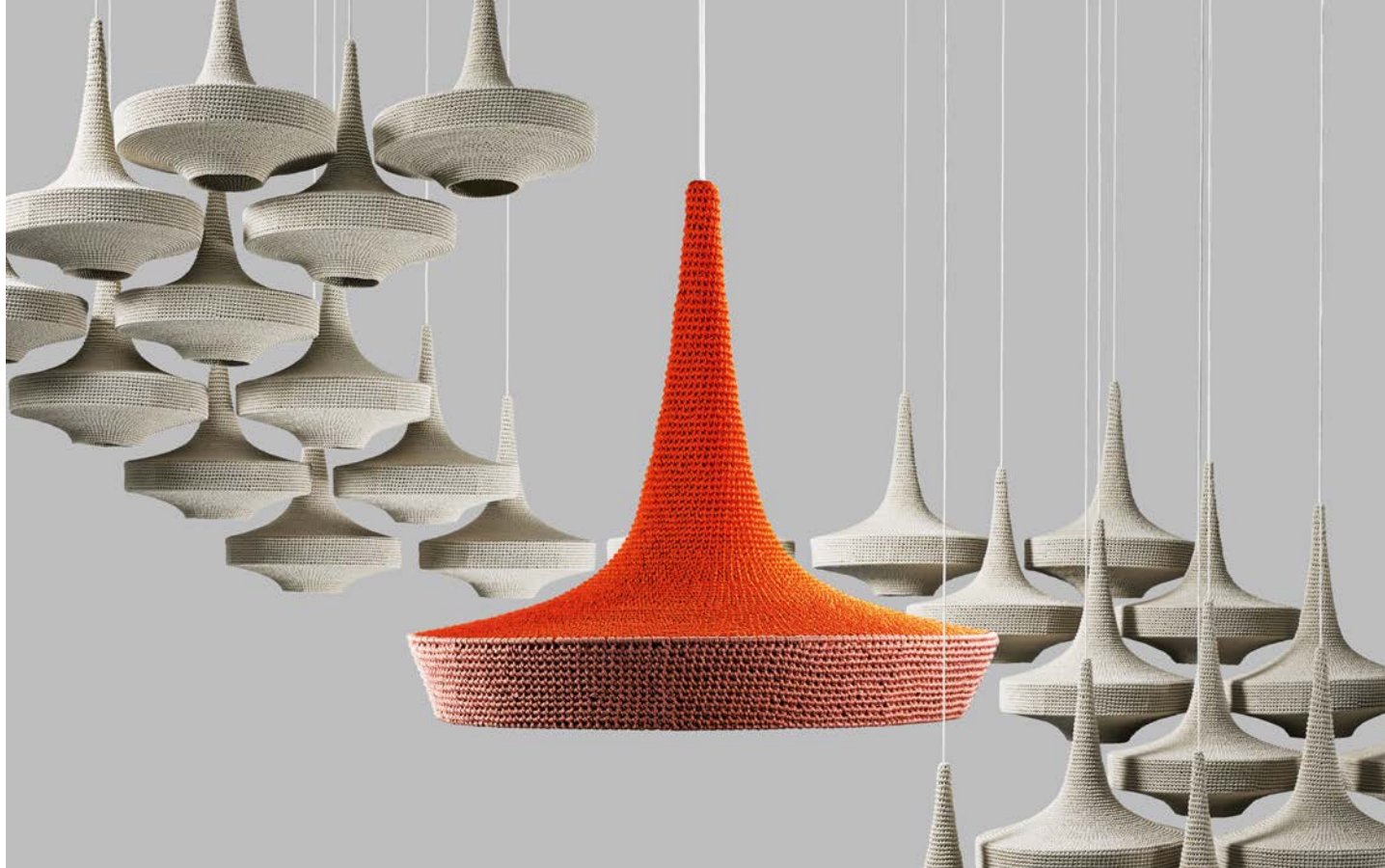
Two exquisite examples of Heather Gillespie's engraved glassware.

Heather used diamond, stone and copper wheels to slow grind away the glass, but is particularly known for employing a specialist 16th-century technique of copper wheel engraving.

John Galvin has been handmaking bespoke furniture for over ten years.







## *Championing craftsmanship*

MICHELLE EMMERSON, CEO OF WALPOLE, REVEALS THREE NAMES WORTH NOTING

Founded in 1990, Walpole has a tightly focused membership of 170 of Britain's finest luxury brands. It was formed with a mission to "promote, protect and develop the unique qualities of UK luxury: long tradition, rich heritage, superior craftsmanship, innovation, design and service". In addition, it helps to nurture rising talent with a programme entitled Brands of Tomorrow, and the annual Walpole Crafted programme, which provides one-to-one mentorship and a series of developmental workshops for up to ten individuals and businesses each year.

The aim is to foster a sense of entrepreneurialism and provide opportunities to help artisan brands to expand and realise the extra potential beyond the traditional owner/maker scope of many businesses.

Michelle Emmerson, CEO of Walpole, highlights three outstanding makers to watch out for: "I found it very difficult to choose just three rising stars, since Walpole mentors and nurtures so many incredible craftmakers each year. However, my choices are Heather Gillespie – a hugely talented glass engraver and artist who has also

perfected the 16th-century craft of copper wheel engraving, which she combines with her 21st-century approach to create her stunning contemporary pieces today; Innovative lighting and interior accessories designer, Naomi Paul, who specialises in handcrafted objects for interior spaces, with a strong focus on sustainability; And, finally, John Galvin, an award-winning furniture designer and cabinet maker from Glasgow, who uses traditional techniques for his designs and one-off commissions, which have been shown in exhibitions around the world."

All three specialists are being championed by Walpole as part of their Brands of Tomorrow campaign. Heather Gillespie graduated from Edinburgh College of Art in 2006 and, afterwards, continued to study glass techniques; refining her skills and perfecting the craft of copper wheel engraving. She moved to the Czech Republic for some time in order to be mentored by Peter Rath, part owner of the prestigious glass company of Lobmeyr in Vienna. Gillespie reveals that the craft of copper wheel engraving is no longer

taught in any UK institute. Today, she can be found working from her studio, based in Cumbria.

Naomi Paul studied Graphic Design at Central Saint Martins before going on to complete a degree in Constructed Textile Design at Chelsea College of Arts. She graduated in 2006. Today, she runs an eponymous studio and has been enjoying support from customers across the globe, with notable success in the US and Australia. In 2014, she was one of the 50 designers invited to showcase their products at The Campaign for Wool Interiors Collection, the patron of which is HRH The Prince of Wales, who instigated the campaign in 2010.

John Galvin studied furniture design and construction at The College of Building and Printing, in Glasgow. He established John Galvin Design in 2008 and his energy is now primarily focused on creating bespoke furniture and one-off commissions for clients in both commercial and private domestic environments.

[gillespieglass.co.uk](http://gillespieglass.co.uk); [naomipaul.co.uk](http://naomipaul.co.uk)  
[johngalvindesign.com](http://johngalvindesign.com); [thewalpole.co.uk](http://thewalpole.co.uk)



## Passion & print

WALKER GREENBANK DESIGN  
DIRECTOR, CLAIRE VALLIS,  
PINPOINTS TEXTILE GRADUATE  
CHLOE GREGORY

Some may not have heard of Walker Greenbank, but they will undoubtedly have heard of the fabric and wallpaper brands it creates: Zoffany, Sanderson and Harlequin, to name a few. The group actively seeks out and supports new talent – often recruiting fresh graduates for its design studios. In July this year, Claire Vallis and her team discovered Chloe Gregory at the New Designers exhibition in London, of which the company is also a proud sponsor. Vallis confirms, “We passionately believe that supporting and nurturing new design talent is essential and, undoubtedly, our own business has benefited considerably from this exciting collaboration.” Gregory graduated from Bath Spa University this year, and describes herself as an illustrator and surface-pattern designer, specialising in screen print and floral designs. Her inspiration for shape, pattern and repeat comes in the form of plants, flowers, natural surroundings and scenes. Her designs are then developed through painting and drawing with watercolour and acrylic paints, dip pens and fine liners to produce detailed and intricate illustrations to create print designs.

Vallis is passionate in her reasons for spotlighting Gregory’s talent: “Chloe is a standout graduate, her work was a fresh look at florals with brilliant colour. She had a real enthusiasm for the print room and process, which was refreshing. Her magnificent designs have evolved from her beautiful drawing and carefully observed colour studies, to create a very distinctive work.”

[sanderson-uk.com](http://sanderson-uk.com)

[chloegregorytextiles.wordpress.com](http://chloegregorytextiles.wordpress.com)



### CLOCKWISE FROM

ABOVE Gregory has a passion for hands-on screen printing and cuts all her stencil designs by hand, too. Claire Vallis heads the design teams for all fabric brands across Walker Greenbank. This dramatic Iris design was shown by Gregory at her debut at the New Designers exhibition, on a stand taken by Bath Spa University for 16 of its course graduates.

All of the designs start as sketches. Gregory can be contacted via her blog, and she is currently finalising price points for her fabrics.

Gregory has won a four-week internship with the Sanderson studio.





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# BUILDING ON *hopes and dreams*

When developing an ideal home, a good relationship with an architect could make the difference between a restoration nightmare and turning a grand design into reality







Talented architects will bring imagination, lateral thinking, and a thorough knowledge of how far the planning process can be pushed in pursuit of perfection, even to a straightforward project. But this relationship can be delicate, particularly since it is literally the roof over one's head that is at stake. Getting this important relationship right will require tact, gut feeling and a very thorough legal contract.

#### CALLING IN A PROFESSIONAL

It is perfectly possible to reconfigure or extend a property without an architect. Just as it is possible to drive a car without having lessons first. Doing things and doing things well are very different beasts, and a design amateur cannot expect to have the same knowledge and finesse as an architect with years of academic training behind them.

Nick Willson, director of Nick Willson Architects, says that prospective clients continually ask him to justify his fees. "The value that a good design brings is more than just monetary," he explains. "An architect can create a bespoke, beautiful space that is flooded by natural light, that uses clever storage or use of awkward spaces and sites. A view may be opened up, new technologies used and sustainable strategies employed, to save on energy."

For Silvia Ullmayer, a director of ullmayersylvester, what an architect brings to a project is a crucial mix of artistic and practical knowledge. "The first and foremost value that architects add is design and quality – from concept through to detail," she opines. "No other profession is trained to imagine and foresee as well as having the technical skills to deliver a built project."

However, architectural and interior designer Ben Pentreath believes that some homeowners, depending on their experience and requirements, may have less need to call in an architect. "For all sorts of projects, interior designers may be as well suited to interpret your dreams," he suggests. "If you are purely restoring an old house a building surveyor could be more suited, bringing less design flair but often more technical skill."



#### DEGREES OF SERVICE

As well as designing a scheme, an architect can help obtain planning permission, negotiate party wall agreements, help with tendering for builders, and manage a build. Some may also advise on how to decorate the new space, right down to the artwork.

Most practices allow clients to decide how much – or little – assistance they require. It is possible to hire an architect to draw up the plans and then take over as project manager.

When it comes to paying an architect, the most common options are by hourly fees, lump-sum payments, or fees calculated as a percentage of the project budget – and none are ideal, according to Francis Terry, a director of Quinlan and Francis Terry Architects. "Paying a percentage can get quite fraught; if someone wants some gold taps they don't see why the architect should get paid more," he explains. "In fact gold taps are very complicated to fit, but people do feel they are being ripped off."

However, Terry feels hourly payments can be equally tricky. "It does not make the architect motivated to be time efficient... it is a blank cheque," he warns.

Lump-sum payments are also not without challenges, as it is often hard to assess how much the architect will need to do if the work has not yet begun.

Whatever the payment arrangement agreed, it should form one of the key parts of a contract – an essential aspect of the process. Richard Brindley, executive director of membership and profession at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), suggests starting out by paying an hourly fee for the design to be drawn up, and then deciding on how to pay for later stages of work as they come up. ►

**ABOVE** Although some skilled and experienced builders may undertake simple additions, an architect will have the expertise to consider more technical devices such as cantilevered staircases and light apertures. This design is by Yiangou.

**OPPOSITE** In a project by ADAM Architecture, this family kitchen, with its spacious and light interior, is housed in the former Edwardian orangery. See the full project in the new book *The Country House Ideal* (£40, Merrell).





**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE** Green and white tones feature in the kitchen of a farmhouse designed and built by Ben Pentreath. In refurbishing a Grade II listed building, Yiangou Architects included reclaimed timber and flagstone flooring. A Palladian-style villa by ADAM Architecture replaced an unremarkable 18th-century cottage, as explained in *The Country House Ideal* (£40, Merrell). Architects can often work closely with designers such as Maurizio Pellizzoni to arrive at an ideal interior.

The contract should include a detailed brief of the scheme, and the architect's exact duties, down to how often they will visit the site and whether they will email or telephone with updates.

A timeframe and budget can be included in a contract, although it is an uncomfortable truth that, with building projects, nothing is set in stone, and these will only ever be a guideline.

Peter Murray, chairman of New London Architecture, says architects should be able to offer an idea of price. "They should know what something they draw will cost, although not down to the penny, but some are better at this than others," he comments.

Timing is another piece-of-string question. Willson suggests allowing several months for the design of a new build house, two to four weeks for a planning application to be prepared, and (at least) eight to ten weeks for a planning application to be determined. There will then be a delay whilst detailed information is collated for the planning authorities. Tendering for contractors could take six weeks, and a build will take nine months to a year, at a conservative estimate.

#### MANAGING THE RELATIONSHIP

Richard Brindley likens choosing an architect to selecting a surgeon for a major procedure, and suggests asking friends, seeking inspiration from magazines, and then doing "desk research" by looking at firms'

previous projects online. Most architects will offer a free initial consultation, either on the telephone or on the site. "It is really a matter of chemistry. This has to be someone you want to work with," he says.

Pentreath agrees. "I think personality is crucial," he explains. "You're going to know each other better than you can imagine by the end."

"I can normally tell within the first phone call whether we are like-minded people, and I always ask for a meeting in my office before we start work or visit the site, so that they can see how we operate and I can better understand their aspirations and projects."

Making a mood board before meeting an architect is a good idea. "The more information you can give an architect the more they have to respond to," observes Brindley. "They are trained to see potential and opportunities. An architect will respond to your ideas and think laterally. They will see potential that might surprise you."

Tim Boyd, a founding partner at Michaelis Boyd architects says instinct is hugely important when hiring an architect. But taking in references is another way to assess a practice before committing. "You can ask to speak to previous clients about the work they have had done," he comments.

One important thing to establish is the ethos of the practice, because some firms interpret clients' ideas, whilst others have a distinct style. "There are some ►









Architectural firm Hackett Holland undertook the restoration of a London townhouse designed by Robert Adam, converting it from offices to a period home.

architects who will do what you want them to do and some who have a more artistic approach,” says Murray.

Boyd believes architect and client should meet in person regularly – once or twice a week – at the early stages when initial concept designs are being drawn up. When work has started he recommends fortnightly site meetings.

He also suggests keeping a note of what was discussed and sending an email afterwards, as an aide-memoire to all concerned, which will reduce the potential for disagreement down the line.

In Brindley’s experience “nine out of ten” problems between architect and client arise through miscommunication, so be crystal clear from the start about what is expected, and talk regularly. Be realistic about the project, too, as problems are likely to occur that will be beyond an architect’s control.

A difficulty most architects dread is a vacillating client who keeps on making changes. “You can, of course, make changes, but you cannot then expect everything to go at the same speed,” Boyd emphasises.

If relations do sour, Brindley advises that contracts should be set out in stages – design, planning, commissioning, and so on – and should be phrased so they can be terminated at the end of any stage.

If matters escalate, RIBA chartered practices have an internal complaints system and, if that is not sufficient, RIBA can arbitrate. Litigation – expensive and time consuming – should be a last resort.

For the vast majority, of course, working with a professional architect is an invaluable experience that not only helps to flesh out an idea and pre-empt potential problems but also allows for dream homes to be brought to life. ■

**ABOVE RIGHT** The Old Garden, in Twickenham, is a perfectly executed classical house built by Quinlan and Francis Terry Architects, a practice favoured by HRH Prince Charles.

**RIGHT** When commissioning an architect, they should always offer a plan that is drawn to scale, as well as a longitudinal section of the project.



## ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

People often find architects through personal recommendation, but the RIBA ([architecture.com](http://architecture.com)) can provide a list of architects who carry out residential projects locally.

Architects Republic ([architectsrepublic.com](http://architectsrepublic.com)) is a free service that allows clients to select architects based on location, specialist skills – from ecohomes to restoring historic buildings – and budget.

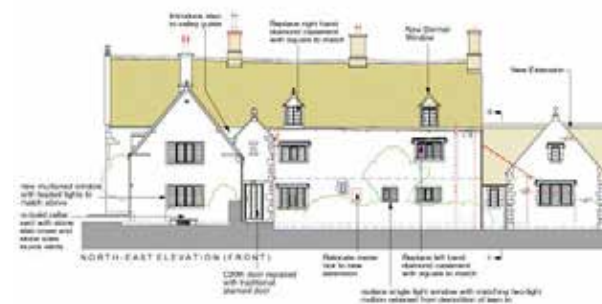
Reputable practices always have full showcases of completed projects online, which will give you an idea of their style, main areas of expertise and design philosophy. It is also worth asking to speak to previous clients about their experiences.

When negotiating, RIBA has standardised contracts, which can be downloaded ([architecture.com](http://architecture.com)).

All architects should have professional indemnity (PI) insurance to cover on-site accidents and problems with the finished product, even if the fault was with the builder or manufacturer.

There have been cases of people falsely passing themselves off as architects. Always check with Architects Registration Board (ARB) before signing up a practice ([arb.org.uk](http://arb.org.uk)). The ARB can also help mediate serious problems.

FEATURE RUTH BLOOMFIELD PHOTOGRAPHS P102 AND P105 (TOP RIGHT) PAUL BARKER





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A photograph of a bed with a large tufted blue headboard, white pillows, and a floral duvet cover. The bed is flanked by two bedside lamps.

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# INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Hidden, high-tech features incorporated into well-designed kitchens offer all the latest conveniences, alongside a timeless sensibility

Fitting high-tech features in a kitchen will undoubtedly save time and energy, whilst adding an element of fun to the most mundane of tasks. Yet not all of us wish for a kitchen that speaks obviously of its modern components. To maintain a classic feel, consider investing in one of the latest integrated solutions designed to be cleverly concealed within an elegant exterior. These hidden details make it possible to create a traditional room scheme that belies the technology within. From cabinetry that comes with motorised doors to sensor controlled sinks, there is something to suit almost every need and lifestyle.

“As the kitchen becomes a multifunctional living space, our lifestyles demand much more from the [kitchen] design,” explains Graeme Smith, of Second Nature Kitchens.

Instead of being daunted by the technology that is available, make a plan of the features and functions that would make life easier. This could be in terms of cooking capabilities, more efficient extraction, a good lighting system or a complete home automation system.



## LIGHT FANTASTIC

Lighting can be used in all sorts of clever ways: to add mood, provide task lighting for preparing and cooking food, or to create feature areas and illuminate the dining table, island or breakfast bar. One of the latest innovations is to offer a dual-function design, such as SensioSound from Sensio Lighting, an LED Bluetooth speaker light. This under-cabinet light is great fun when entertaining and prevents the worktop from being cluttered up with speakers and cables. Simply connect a mobile device wirelessly to the SensioSound by enabling Bluetooth, and it is ready to play music.

*SensioSound offers a high output white LED light with built-in speaker, enabling music to be played whilst cooking and dining, from £82.92, Sensio*







### HIDDEN TREASURES

High-tech design elements and appliances and a kitchen with a timeless mood are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Much depends on the overall design of the kitchen and the way in which appliances are incorporated into it. In this kitchen – where the owner specifically sought a more traditional feel, in keeping with the broader design of her house – framed, Shaker-style units with glass boxes and additional beading on cupboard doors, all painted in 'Blue Blood' by Paint Library, mitigate the clean, modern lines of necessary appliances. Not shown are a built-in wine fridge and eye-level ovens, a dishwasher and integrated extractor.

*Bespoke, handmade kitchen including Falcon 1092 Deluxe dual-fuel range cooker, Maytag Trilogy SOV028TB fridge, Shaws Edgworth Belfast sink and Quatreau tap, from £20,000, Higham Furniture*



### FUTURE ENDEAVOURS

The once-humble larder has evolved from a simple dried food store to a high-tech haven for everything from housing breakfast essentials, such as a kettle and toaster, to concealing a handy home office. For a taste of what the future might hold, Poggenpohl recently unveiled a groundbreaking, high-spec concept kitchen called The Fourth Wall, which includes a humidity-controlled walk-in larder. Not available for retail, but currently on show in Poggenpohl's Waterloo showroom, the larder features intelligent glass walls and interior lights that can be controlled from an iPad. Contents may be on display or hidden from view depending on the controlled opacity of the glass.

*Larders are increasingly popular, as serious cooks demand easy access to fresh ingredients. Poggenpohl's concept kitchen, The Fourth Wall, features a walk-in humidity-controlled larder. ▶*



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### OVEN READY

Modern built-in ovens offer advanced cooking technology, such as steam injection, pre-set recipes and self-cleaning programmes, but range cookers are now also incorporating features that enable homeowners to have a traditional design with a high spec. “We have seen sales of our range cookers with induction grow,” says Joan Fraser, product development manager at Smeg. “This is down to both the controllability and benefits of induction, plus installation considerations in properties with no access to gas.” For those who can and prefer cooking with gas, consider hob accessories such as teppanyakis, griddles, hot plates and wok burners.

*For flexible cooking, the A2BL-8 Opera dual-cavity range cooker combines a multifunction oven with gas hob and also features a rotisserie, £1,989, Smeg*

### GET CONNECTED

Home automation systems are big news in big-budget kitchens.

Sub-Zero & Wolf are currently the only suppliers of luxury appliances that are compatible with home automation specialists Control4, Crestron and Savant. The Control4 Smart Appliance app, for instance, allows meals to be remotely controlled and monitored, whether the user is home or away. “Today’s mobile devices are aiding mainstream adoption of connected home technology,” explains Susan Cashen, senior vice president of marketing for Control4. “Consumers want to be able to monitor and control everything in their home anywhere, at any time.”

Hoover, meanwhile, is about to launch Wizard, the UK’s first complete family of WiFi enabled appliances. “We expect that this collection will be hugely popular, as it offers consumers the opportunity to have a fully connected kitchen that they can control remotely. It includes an oven, hob, hood, fridge-freezer and a selection of washing machines and dishwashers.”

*Appliances that are compatible with a variety of home automation systems are increasingly popular. ICBIC-24FI freezer and ICBIW-18 integrated wine storage, £8,400; ICBIC-30RID refrigerator, £8,640, all Sub-Zero & Wolf*







## EFFICIENT EXTRACTION

Every kitchen needs powerful extraction to remove cooking odours and steam. The latest hoods include eye-catching statement styles to more discreet ceiling-mounted and downdraft models.

Ideally suited to island cooking, a downdraft extractor sits behind the hob and rises at the touch of a button when needed, slotting down into the worktop after use. Ceiling hoods are flush-fit, offering an unobtrusive look, whilst feature hoods come in all manner of shapes and sizes to take centre stage.

*Statement extractor hood with an elliptical polished stainless steel design. Double Vertigo extractor with six halogen lights, £2,999, Best*



## SENSORY DELIGHT

Sensor taps and infrared soap dispensers are not only easier to use but they are also extremely hygienic, as these non-touch faucets are operated by a simple wave of the hand. Taking this one step further is the eUnit Kitchen from Dornbracht, which gives accurate control of water temperature and volume with a foot sensor, allowing water to flow without having to lift a finger. In addition to this is the electronic strainer waste and a water dispensing function, all in a compact design.

*The eUnit is available in a choice of polished chrome, platinum matt, platinum and cyprum finish, from £3,546, Dornbracht*

## ALL THE EXTRAS

Get more fitted kitchen appliances with a touch of sophisticated technology

### EXTRACTOR FANS

A recessed ceiling hood keeps extraction neatly out of sight. Gorenje's DC9635X model costs around £2,000. Meanwhile, downdraft hoods pop up from the worktop at the touch of a button, then retract back into the surface after use; for this consider the Gorenje DFGA9575BX model, from £1,345.

With touch-control operation and a seven-segment LED display, the Neff D99L20N0 extractor features additional noise insulation, and costs in the region of £1,365.

For handmade quality, the CR700 Ceramica island hood from Caple is the only cooker hood in the UK to have a ceramic body, which has been made by hand with a copper finish in line with the latest trends for kitchens, it is available from around £2,000.

### HIGH-TECH FRIDGES

The latest refrigeration incorporates food-preserving technology, such as humidity-controlled drawers, multi-airflow cooling and built-in antibacterial protection.

"There has been a definite increase in demand for smarter storage options in refrigeration," confirms Dawn Stockell, head of brand at LG Electronics. "With food prices rising, many people are keen for their fridge-freezers to help keep food fresher for longer. LG has a number of solutions that meet this demand, including a Fresh Zero Zone and Moist Balance Crisper." In the United States, there are some WiFi enabled models that allow you to browse the web, access apps and connect to other smart devices, but these are not yet available in the UK.

With Twin Cooling technology, the brand new RH56J6917SL Food ShowCase fridge-freezer from Samsung is a 'fridge within a fridge' for quick and easy access to favourite foods, from £2,199.

### MOTORISED STORAGE

For cabinets and shelves that are difficult to reach, some manufacturers and designers offer a range of electronically controlled doors that can be opened and closed at a single touch. "I often suggest motorised wall cupboards when clients are of different heights," says Sam Hart, designer at Roundhouse kitchens. Other designs incorporate shelves that can be moved up and down remotely.

Meanwhile, to help with lifting heavy appliances such as mixers and blenders, Neil Lerner has a lift-up mechanism that slides back down after use. The unit costs around £450. The designer also uses horizontal 'climbers' (pictured below), which are motorised for electronic opening and closing. The arrangement has a starting price of £1,500.





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# PATTERNED EFFECT

Introducing an element of pattern into a bathroom scheme can create subtle sophistication, dramatic interest and even a sense of texture

There are likely to be fewer patterns found in the average bathroom than in any other room in the house. Many of us steer away from using pattern in the bathroom for fear of it quickly appearing dated, or perhaps because it seems difficult to get 'right'. Yet pattern can bring so many desirable elements to a bathroom scheme, from an accomplished sense of cohesion to subtle texture and interest; patterns can even influence the mood of the room. Interior designer, Joanna Wood explains, "I really like to use a patterned wallpaper or fabric to make the bathroom more interesting and add a touch of character and personality. Whether you desire a flowered wallpaper for a few years, and then to change to a checked one, the use of pattern is the most easy and effective way of redesigning your bathroom without having to change fixtures and fittings."

Each of the following examples demonstrates how the use of patterned tiles, fabric and wallpaper can be used to create very different results.



## SMART BLUES

Perennial favourites, blue and white make for a quintessential colour combination for a bathroom. However, there is no need to keep to just plain blocks of colour. A splash of pattern on the blind lifts this whole scheme, taking it from expected to stylishly layered. The patterned fabric cleverly unites the separate blocks of blue and white seen in the rest of the room to bring a sense of cohesion. By choosing a damask-style print, the homeowner has used pattern to set the tone for a classic theme, rather than a seaside notion – which might have been achieved with a striped blind but was not the desired effect in this case. To create a practical window treatment the fabric can be backed with blackout or thermal lining.

*Roman blind in Kashmir Porcelain, starting from £100 for 65cm by 75cm, including measuring and fitting, Hillarys*







### WALL FLOWERS

Traditional bathroom mosaics bring to mind eye-catching floor tiles in bright colours. Contrary to that vision, these pictorial wall tiles are created in reserved, muted tones, which are all the more enchanting and sophisticated for not being so obvious. The pink undertones of the blossom tree, echoed in the pretty lampshades of the wall lights, warm up the scheme and bestow the room with champagne tones.

*Blossom Branch glass mosaic from the Azure collection, POA, Ann Sacks*

### LOCAL LANDSCAPE

Based on the countryside and local landmarks in and around Tetbury in the Cotswolds, this contemporary toile wallpaper is often used in bedrooms. The benefit of using the design in a bathroom has been demonstrated here by pairing the silvery-grey tones of the pattern with metallic bath exteriors, radiators and marbled floor tiles – a match that would work well in both country and town bathrooms.

*Humber baths with a polished and lacquered exterior, from £3,570 each, Drummonds; Royal Oak wallpaper, 137cm width, £56.40 a metre, Lewis & Wood*



### TRANSFORMATIVE APPEAL

With scenes of elegant swans, weeping willows and water lilies, this beautiful Nina Campbell wallpaper absorbs one into an idyllic imagined vision. The statement has been heightened further with accessories, such as a grand mirror, ornate wall lights and a twinkling chandelier.

*Penrose free-standing acrylic double-ended bath, £1600; sink from the Blenheim suite; Hemsby taps; Chesham Grand mirror in amber gold, £1495, all Heritage Bathrooms; Swan Lake wallpaper, £64 a roll, Nina Campbell* ▶





### BLOCK PRINT

Laying an intricate floor pattern is a clever way to add depth and warmth to a bathroom with a large amount of floor space, whilst still allowing a free-standing bath to take centre stage. In a room where there is little space for decorative touches, or such items would not fit the pared-back style of the scheme, a patterned floor brightens the space as an ornate decoration in itself. The classic black, white and grey of these tiles makes a sophisticated alternative to a black-and-white chequer arrangement. They will also coordinate with many colour combinations, thus allowing for flexibility if the overall scheme is altered as time goes by.

*La Rochelle cast-iron bateau bath, available in any Farrow & Ball colour, £1,995; handmade cement encaustic tiles, £144 a square metre, all The Cast Iron Bath Company*

### ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Hanging patterned fabric panels on bathroom walls has more than one advantage. Visually, the fabric softens the appearance of the room with its gentle and tactile texture. Fabric walls are also excellent at insulating a bathroom, which is especially useful in older houses with high ceilings.

Although the use of fabric panels is a historical interiors technique, by using contemporary or timeless prints they will not appear old-fashioned. In this bathroom, interior designer Joanna Wood has created a countrified aesthetic with a classic check print. The panels are made from Lewis & Wood's Woodchester Check fabric and were formed by stretching the fabric over battens. Good humidity regulation is essential for fabric-lined schemes. Neatly matched edging, which is even traced around the splash-back, gives the room a professional finish.

*Interior design by Joanna Wood; wall brackets, Vaughan; Woodchester Check fabric, £48 a metre, Lewis & Wood*



### CHANGE OF DIRECTION

Gliding down the wall in a mixture of shimmering and smooth surfaces, these chevron tiles create a lightening and brightening effect. Despite the bold pattern covering the whole of this expansive wall, the impact is graceful and uplifting, rather than heavy. Handmade from recycled glass, the pearly finish looks particularly refined when paired with neutral and unfussy fixtures and fittings. That said, a smattering of marble, such as this countertop bowl, harmonises beautifully and underlines an opulent mood. The busy pattern works well in a modern scheme with contemporary lighting, as seen here. The tiles could also be paired with more classic bathroom furnishings to create a luxurious guest bathroom or an indulgent, yet homely, spa feel in an en suite bathroom.

*Kennedy tiles from the High Society Glass collection, £72.72 each; Alimia Carrara marble bowl, £600; empire vintage bronze tap, £1,000; Whitechapel countertop, all Fired Earth ■*



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# QUINTESSENTIALLY

Tempting seasonal recipes | Heavenly hydrangeas | The art of self education

## AUTUMN SPOILS

As summer light begins to wane, thoughts turn from leisurely picnics in the garden to reaping the rewards of established vegetable plots and planting bulbs for next spring's floral displays. Whether digging up the last of this year's crop of potatoes or attending to tenacious blooms, the first tingle of autumn's crisp chill helps to provide a more conducive temperature for garden toil than the heat of high summer. Remember to take cuttings of tender perennials to ensure the best results next year, before moving those such as fuchsia and gazania indoors to avoid the coming frosts. Wooden apple bird feeder, £5; slate 'Pick me' plaque, £5; ceramic planters, from £10; willow pig, £12; garden tools, from £12, all Sainsbury's



A vibrant still life featuring various fresh fruits. In the background, a large white bowl is filled with a mix of purple, green, and yellow grapes. To the right, a white bowl with a green rim is overflowing with red apples, some still attached to green leaves. In the foreground, a small white ceramic bowl with a green rim is packed with dark blue blueberries. To the left, a clear glass jar is filled with bright red raspberries. The fruits are arranged on a light-colored, weathered wooden surface. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor garden setting. The overall lighting is bright and natural, highlighting the textures and colors of the produce.

# *Nature's* LARDER

Fruit oozing with juices and bursting with flavour is delicious when freshly picked, but when introduced into a dessert, or made into a rich jam, it becomes all the more tempting





#### DAMSON & APPLE EVE'S PUDDING

Eve's pudding – so simple and yet so scrumptious – has fallen out of favour, and it can be hard to find a recipe for it in a cookery book nowadays. It is basically fruit with sponge cake on top, and it is usually made with apples but can be made with a glut of any fruit. Damsons and dessert apples together are a great combination because the apple tames the intense sourness of the damsons (as well as reducing the number of stones), whilst the damsons add a pink juiciness. It is possibly best when the fruit is just cooked and the sponge mixture is not quite fully cooked, as this creates a gloriously gooey combination of juice and cake in the middle.

**Serves 4**

**For the fruit mixture:**

About 300g damsons

About 300g dessert apples, peeled, cored and chopped into pieces roughly the same size as the damsons

75g granulated sugar

**For the sponge topping:**

55g soft margarine or butter, softened,

plus extra for greasing

55g caster sugar

1 egg

55g self-raising flour

¼ tsp baking powder

1 tsp vanilla extract

Handful of flaked almonds (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Butter an ovenproof baking dish about 18cm in diameter.
- Place the whole damsons, chopped apples and granulated sugar in the baking dish. It should look fairly deeply filled, as the fruit will collapse as it cooks. Try to level the surface, so that the sponge mixture stays mainly on the top.
- Place the margarine or butter, caster sugar, egg, flour, baking powder and vanilla into a food processor or mixing bowl and pulse or mix until evenly combined and smooth. Spread it as evenly as possible over the fruit, completely covering it. Scatter the flaked almonds over the top, if using. Bake for 45–50 minutes, until golden and the sponge springs back when pushed gently. Leave to cool slightly before serving. Serve warm, with thick custard, cream, or good vanilla ice cream. ►

*Autumn berries  
hung like  
clusters of coral  
beads, as in  
those fabled  
orchards where  
the fruits  
were jewels*

From *The Life and  
Adventures of  
Martin Chuzzlewit*,  
by Charles Dickens



### BRAMBLE FOOL

A very pretty pudding for when the sun is shining. It is possible to make the bramble purée when blackberries are plentiful and keep it in the freezer. Once prepared, it is the work of moments to turn the purée into a beautiful dessert at any time of the year.

**Serves 4**

**400g blackberries**

**125g granulated sugar**

**1 tbsp water**

**Juice of ½ lemon**

**300ml cups double cream**

**A few drops of vanilla extract**

**250g Greek yoghurt (or the zero per cent fat variety, if preferred)**

- Pick out 12 pretty blackberries and set aside. Place the remaining blackberries in a saucepan with the sugar and a tablespoon of water. Slowly bring to the boil over a low

heat, until they are juicy. Push the mixture through a fine sieve or a food mill to remove the seeds. Add the lemon juice and leave to cool completely.

- Whip the cream with the vanilla extract until soft peaks form. Fold in the yoghurt and two-thirds of the purée, until combined.
- Spoon the mixture into glasses and drizzle over the remaining blackberry purée. Decorate with the reserved berries and serve straight away.





## BLACKBERRY, PORT & ALMOND TRIFLE

A gorgeous trifle with a moist, lemony, almond cake soaked in dark blackberry and port jelly, then strewn with fresh blackberries and topped with a rich mascarpone cream. The cake can be made a couple of days in advance and it is best to make the jelly the day before it is due to be served, so that it can set. Making the trifle is not very onerous because its various components can be made whenever a spare moment arises. On the day of serving, it takes barely more than five minutes to whip up the mascarpone mixture and assemble the trifle.

**Serves 10–12**

*For the almond cake:*

125g cup butter, softened, plus extra for greasing  
125g caster sugar  
2 large eggs  
30g plain flour  
125g ground almonds  
Zest and juice of 1 lemon

*For the jelly:*

750g blackberries  
100ml water  
150g granulated sugar  
Juice of 1 lemon  
6 leaves of gelatine  
200ml port

*To assemble:*

200g blackberries  
500g mascarpone cheese  
75ml single cream  
75g caster sugar  
55g flaked almonds, toasted

- Make the cake 2–3 days before serving the trifle. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Butter a 18cm/7 inch diameter shallow cake tin and line with baking parchment.
- Beat the butter and sugar together until pale and fluffy. Break in the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each egg and alternating with spoonfuls of flour. Gently stir in the ground almonds, the lemon zest and juice, and scrape the mixture into the prepared tin.
- Bake for about 25 mins, until the top is firm to the touch and a skewer comes out

clean. Leave to cool in the tin for ten mins and then turn out onto a wire rack. Once the cake is completely cold, wrap it in foil until required.

- A day in advance, make the jelly. Put the blackberries in a saucepan with 100ml water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for ten mins until the berries are very soft. Squash them with a potato masher until completely crushed. Tip the mixture into a fine sieve and stir very gently to help it through, but do not press the flesh downwards through the sieve. Add the sugar and lemon juice to the blackberry juice and heat gently until the sugar has dissolved. Measure the juice: there should be around 600ml. If not, top it up with boiling water.

- Soak the gelatine leaves in cold water for about five minutes to soften. Then squeeze out the excess water, one leaf at a time, and whisk into the hot blackberry juice until completely dissolved. Finally, add the port.
- Unwrap the cake, break it into chunks and place in a glass trifle dish. Pour the jelly mixture over it, leave to cool and then chill in the fridge, preferably overnight.
- To assemble the trifle, scatter the fresh blackberries over the cake and jelly in the trifle dish.
- Whisk the mascarpone and cream together and then add the sugar until smooth and creamy, like softly whipped double cream. Spread this over the blackberries, then scatter the toasted almonds over the top and serve. ▶





## BRAMBLE & APPLE JAM WITH CINNAMON

This is for those who enjoy jam with proper pieces of fruit in it, rather than jelly, and it is practically foolproof – a good introduction to jam-making. The apple reduces the proportion of bramble seeds and adds a lovely texture, whilst the spices make it really special, though they can be omitted, if preferred. The jam is good as a filling for a Victoria sponge, along with a generous quantity of whipped cream. It adds a fabulous purple layer to the middle of the cake – not to mention a delicious flavour.

Makes 5–6 large jars

1kg mixed dessert and baking apples, peeled, cored and chopped into dice

1kg blackberries, washed

1.5kg white granulated sugar

1–2 cinnamon sticks, depending on size

1 tsp grated nutmeg

- Put all the ingredients into a heavy-bottomed pan. Cook gently and stir until all the sugar has dissolved and the mixture has become juicy. (Add a few drops of water if concerned that it is going to catch). Increase the heat and boil rapidly, stirring to ensure it is not sticking, until setting point is reached. Spoon into warm, sterilised jars and seal.

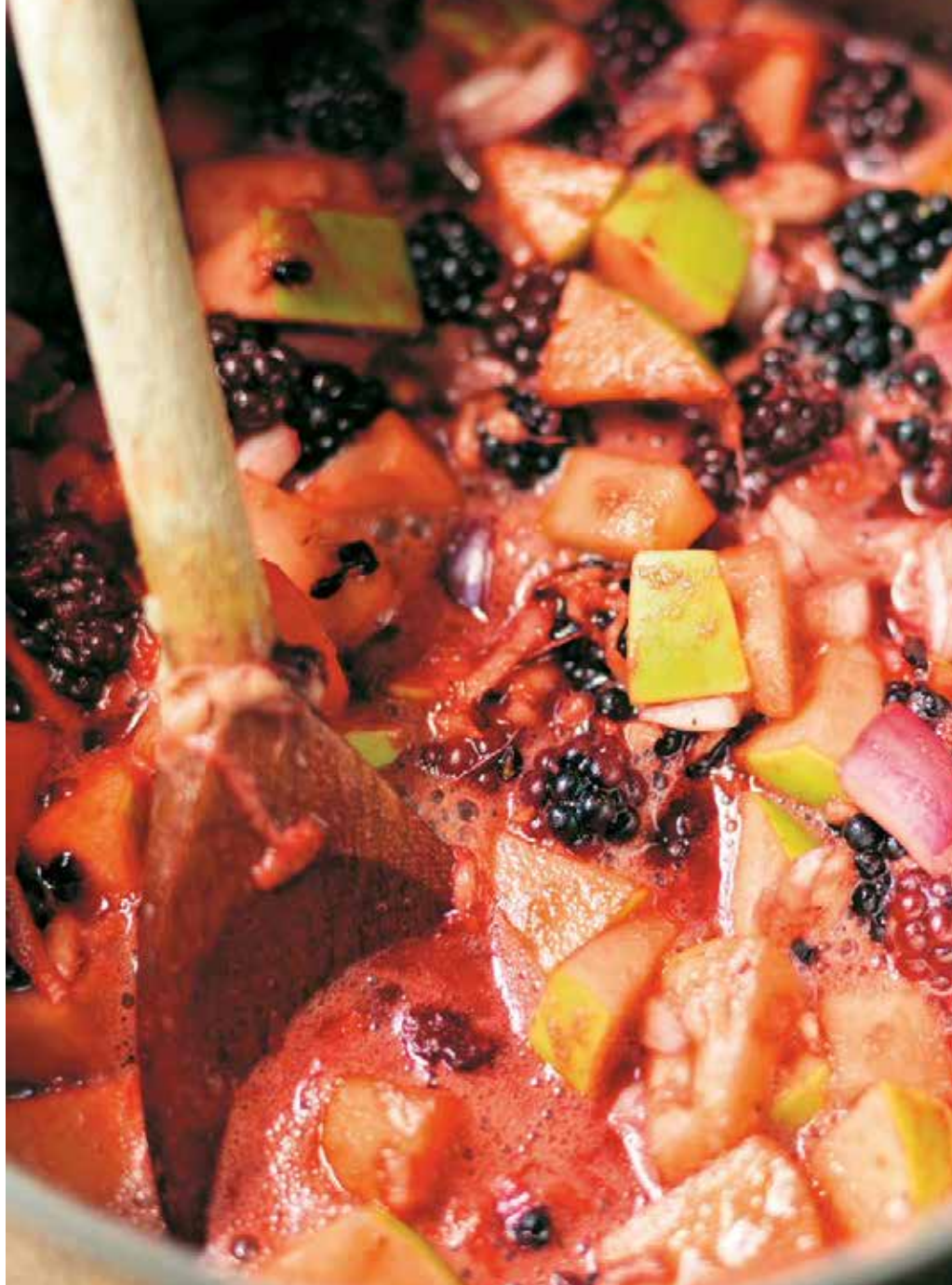
## FRUIT WITH STONES

There are two categories of wild fruits with stones: members of the plum family and members of the cherry family. Both are great prizes, especially when trees hold larger fruit, as it will always be the stones that take up time when in the kitchen. If very lucky, some fruit can be found that is sweet enough to be eaten straight from the tree – although the chances are that someone (or something) will have already eaten them! Luckily, both sour plums and sour cherries are excellent cooked and will handsomely repay the time spent on them.



*Recipes are  
extracted from  
The  
Hedgerow  
Cookbook  
by Caro*

*Willson and Ginny Knox, available  
from National Trust properties and  
[nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk). Recipe  
photography by Cristian Barnett.*







## WILD PLUM AND PISTACHIO CAKE

This cake can be made with any of the plum family, or indeed cherries – if there is time to remove their stones. The cake pictured above has been made with greeny-yellow plums. It is very light and fruity and is probably at its very best about an hour after it comes out of the oven, still slightly warm and very moist. It is perfectly partnered with crème fraîche or vanilla ice cream. It is equally good made with almonds, but the colour is not quite so interesting. Those with fussy children need not worry, as they will not be able to tell it has got nuts in it until told – after a second helping!

**Serves 6–8**  
**500g wild plums**

**175g unsalted butter, softened, plus extra for greasing**  
**175g caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling on top**  
**Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon**  
**3 large eggs**  
**100g unsalted pistachio nuts, ground**  
**100g self-raising flour, sifted**  
**Icing sugar, for dusting**

- Preheat the oven to 170°C/325°F/gas mark 3. Butter a 20cm springform tin and line the bottom with baking parchment. Halve the plums and remove the stones.
- Cream the softened butter, caster sugar, lemon zest and juice until pale and fluffy, using an electric mixer. Beat in the eggs one at a time, alternating with a spoonful of the ground nuts. Add the remaining

nuts and continue to whisk until the mixture is airy and fluffy. Lightly fold in the sifted flour. Spoon half the mixture into the prepared cake tin. Cover with half the plums, then cover them with the remaining cake mixture. Smooth out the top and finish with a layer of plum halves, cut side uppermost (which will look lovely if they do not sink). Sprinkle with a little more sugar.

- Bake for about an hour, but check after 30 mins and cover with foil if the cake is browning too much. The cake is done when it is golden and firm to the touch and a skewer comes out reasonably cleanly. Leave to cool in the tin for ten mins, then transfer to a wire rack to let the cake cool completely. Dust with icing sugar just before serving. ■




There are over 70 species in the genus *Hydrangea*, including the popular *Hydrangea macrophylla*, *Hydrangea arborescens* and *Hydrangea paniculata*.

# *In Tender Profusion*

Displayed en masse or sparingly, fresh or dried, full-figured hydrangeas add gentle colour and form to a home all year round





Consider the hydrangea, that most traditional of garden plants: frequently overlooked for favour of companions ostensibly more glamorous – dahlias, bearded irises, even alliums – they often come in for a bad rap. “I absolutely loathe hydrangeas,” Madonna once said, forgetting that her microphone was turned on, after a fan presented her with a lilac stem. Yet these matronly stalwarts of the garden, which so diligently flank drives or entrances and fill shady spaces with abundant leaf and flower, have charms that demand further inspection. Hydrangeas offer heart-stopping beauty in various magnificent forms throughout the year: in summer, youthful, tender and graceful; at other times they are moodier, more nuanced, both in form and colour; later still, the flowers possess a singular ethereality as wind and rain turn their petals to filigree. Some hydrangeas are squat and heavily floriferous, whilst others will scale garden walls, proffering the most delicate of lacy blooms as they climb. In short, there is a reason hydrangeas are so often found in the gardens of true gardeners. ►





### DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER

Being native to both Asia and North America, hydrangeas were introduced to Europe by early plant hunters and explorers in the eighteenth century, with species arriving first from Pennsylvania and later from China and Japan. At this time, Japan, in particular, was largely inaccessible to foreigners, so specimens that could be obtained were cherished. Since then, however, the Japanese species *Hydrangea macrophylla* has become one of the most ubiquitous in England, with both mophead and more delicate lacecap varieties appearing in a range of gardens.

Despite the predominance of *H. macrophylla*, there are over 70 species of hydrangea. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) notes that hydrangeas “can be deciduous or evergreen shrubs, or self-clinging climbers with flowers in clusters, usually comprising both small fertile and more showy sterile flowers”.

The shrubs grow best in moist, humus-rich soil and in dappled shade, making them ideal for inclusion in darker parts of the garden, where their abundant flowers will lighten duller spaces. Flowering time is from late spring to autumn with flowers generally growing on old wood. Hydrangeas range in size from 80cm to 7m, depending on age, and many can be quite long lived. Climbers can reach 15m given the opportunity.

**ABOVE** Hydrangeas make a distinctive addition to flower arrangements, whether they are freshly cut or dried.







*In summer, hydrangeas are youthful and graceful; at other times moodier, more nuanced*



#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Contemporary designers have been including hydrangeas in relaxed arrangements, where they combine well with astatice, roses and even peonies. This arrangement is by Vic Brotherson, whose book *Vintage Flowers* (Kyle Books) considers a simple arranging style.

The volume hydrangeas bring to arrangements makes them ideal for designs that will be used in larger spaces. But a simple wreath of dried flowers is attractive, too.

Often the best treatment is to allow the flowers to be the star of the show.

Current taste is inclined towards hydrangeas in shades of green or white, where they contribute a delicate abundance to arrangements in similar tones.

#### HEAVENLY HUES

One of the best known characteristics of *H. macrophylla*, in particular, is the propensity to change colour with the acidity of the soil in which it grows. For centuries, gardeners have manipulated soil conditions to achieve a desired result – blue in acidic soil, with a pH of 4.5-5, and pink in more alkaline soil. Yet to concentrate solely on achieving a deep blue or eye-catching pink is to overlook the gamut of astonishing colours available.

Latterly, hydrangeas in shades of white and green have become especially popular, not least for weddings, where the massed volume of these flowers will fill a church or reception venue in breathtaking display. Many flowers are green when young before deepening in tone at full bloom.

Those looking to a more contemporary approach would do well to consider *Hydrangea arborescens* ‘Annabelle’, a popular, white-flowering variety recommended by the RHS. Flower heads begin as pale green, before maturing first to white then back to green. Another option is *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Limelight’, which gardener and writer Sarah Raven describes as: “My all round favourite hydrangea, which opens as the brightest acid-green. Then the flowers turn pure ivory, before being washed with rich pink.” ▶









#### WHERE TO SEE

**Trebah Garden** Hydrangeas in this Cornish garden were planted in the 1950s when traditional mopheads were sent to the Covent Garden Flower Market. Most plants are now over 50 years old but continue to flower well, thanks to an annual pruning programme. [trebahgarden.co.uk](http://trebahgarden.co.uk)

**Holehird Gardens** Located near Windermere, hundred of species and varieties grow in this garden, which is home to the Lakeland Horticultural Society. The garden also houses the national plant collections of several other flower species. [holehirdgardens.org.uk](http://holehirdgardens.org.uk)

#### WHERE TO BUY

**Sarah Raven** Respected for pleasing varieties of plants and florist supplies, plus workshops and tutorials. [sarahraven.co.uk](http://sarahraven.co.uk)

**Loder Plants** Stocks one of the widest range of azaleas, rhododendrons and hydrangeas in the country. [loder-plants.co.uk](http://loder-plants.co.uk)

**Burncoose** A popular nursery specialising in less familiar species, available by mail order. Burncoose is attached to the Caerhays Estate, Cornwall, which houses a large collection of hydrangeas. [burncoose.co.uk](http://burncoose.co.uk), [caerhays.co.uk](http://caerhays.co.uk)

**Crocus** A very large, reliable national supplier of plant material. [crocus.co.uk](http://crocus.co.uk)

#### ARRANGING TO EFFECT

Hydrangeas offer much to the home florist, from spring and early summer all the way through to winter, when spent flower heads might be dried and sprayed gold in Christmas arrangements. Whilst these flowers do offer great volume en masse, in the home even a single, well-placed stem will deliver good effect.

Hydrangeas have been cropping up in contemporary flower arrangements by the likes of Vic Brotherson, Flora Starkey as well as Nikki Tibbles and JamJar Flowers for the past few years where both *H. macrophylla* and *H. paniculata* appear alongside popular peonies, cow parsley, astrantia and dahlias.

Yet, as Anna Day and Ellie Jauncey of The Flower Appreciation Society point out in their new book, *An A to Z of all Things Floral* (Sphere), cut hydrangeas can be temperamental – sometimes lasting for weeks, at other times wilting within a few hours. Sarah Raven and The Flower Appreciation Society recommend searing flower ends after picking, either by dipping them in hot water for a minute, or holding them over a flame for a few seconds, to help extend vase life.

#### DRYING HYDRANGEAS

There are three key means of preserving hydrangeas and it is as well to master at least one technique. Once dried, they will last almost indefinitely.

The simplest method is to wait until the flowers have aged on the bush before cutting, removing the leaves, searing the stems, and then leaving to dry in a vase with a little water. The flowers will continue to absorb water slowly, which will help preserve the blooms.

For slightly more involved preparation, do the same as above but place them in a vase with a few centimetres of a mixture of one part glycerine to two parts hot water. Recommended by Raven, this method “takes about a fortnight and will leave the heads soft and silky and make them last for ages.” The glycerine will bring a rich, golden tone to the flowers.

Those more inclined to drying flowers can use a good layer of silica gel in a deep tray. Trim the stems of the flowers so they are quite short, bed the stems in the gel, then pour the remaining gel over the flower, making sure all parts are covered. Dry for several days, then extend the stems with floristry wire for display. ■

**ABOVE** As summer slides into autumn, consider the more nuanced shades of hydrangeas that begin to appear.



# A *Stitch* IN TIME

Shift into the new seasonal mood with a few home makes. These projects are simple to achieve and will bring a warm and comforting touch to a room





### FABRIC-BACKED BLANKETS

Itchy vintage wool blankets are often found for pence languishing in a forgotten box in many a charity shop. In the day of the duvet, very few of us use proper sheets and blankets on the bed, so these beauties are often thrown out for the ease of a modern solution. Adding a pretty fabric backing to these blankets makes them ideal to have across your lap on a chilly evening without suffering the dreaded wool itch.

#### MATERIALS

Old woollen blanket  
1m soft cotton lawn or other fabric of similar weight  
5m bias binding  
Matching thread

1 Wash and dry the blanket on a wool cycle. Give it a good iron, using steam if possible, to remove the creases and to flatten out the blanket.

2 Mark out a 1 x 1.4m rectangle and cut out the piece from the blanket. If the blanket has any holes or damage, repair at this stage with a patch or a little bit of darning.

3 Place the blanket onto the cotton lawn with right sides facing out and smooth everything out. It may help at this stage to weigh down the fabric – old scale weights or tins are ideal for this.

4 Tack the blanket and cotton fabric together along the edges, smoothing it as you go.

5 Trim the cotton lawn to the size of the blanket.

6 Unfold the bias binding and pin down one of the edges of the fabric side. Stitch the bias to the blanket and fabric. It is a good idea to tack all the layers together at this point to make stitching easier. Repeat on the opposite side.

7 Fold the bias over the seam you have just stitched and pin to the blanket side. Hand-stitch the bias down.

8 Repeat for the remaining two sides but leave a little extra tape at each end to fold over and neaten the edge. Now make yourself a cup of tea, grab a good book and snuggle under your warm, cosy blanket.

### BITS & BOBS EIDERDOWN

Who can resist the old-fashioned charm of a pretty, feather-filled eiderdown placed at the end of a bed? Eiderdowns in good condition are rather hard to come by nowadays and, if you do find one, they usually come with a pretty hefty price tag. Along with the whole difficult-to-clean dilemma, they are often on display rather than in daily use. So make one of these splendid eiderdowns using those hoarded fabric scraps and wrap yourself up in a little bit of childhood nostalgia from a time when duvets were unheard of...

#### MATERIALS

100 fabric pieces, 17 x 20cm, for the pockets  
2 fabric rectangles, 1.5m x 22cm  
2 fabric rectangles, 1.1m x 22cm  
Polyester wadding, filling fleece or feathers

1 Place two of the fabric pieces together with the right sides facing in and stitch a 1cm seam around three sides, leaving the fourth side open.

2 Snip the excess fabric from the corners, then turn the pocket out and gently ease out the points.

3 Turn in a 1cm seam to the wrong side on the open edge and press.

4 Stuff the pocket with your chosen filling, being careful not to overfill it.

5 Hand- or machine-stitch the opening closed and repeat until you have 50 pockets. You may wish to give the pocket seams a gentle steam with the iron at this point.

6 Take the four fabric rectangles. Fold each in half along the longer length, with the right sides facing in. Pin and stitch a 1cm seam across both short sides and down the length to create a tube, leaving an opening about halfway along the long side to enable you to stuff the tube with filling.

7 Snip the excess fabric from the corners, then turn the right sides out. Gently ease

out the corner points. Evenly stuff a tube with the filling. Hand-stitch the gap closed. Repeat for the other three tubes.

8 When ready to construct the quilt, start stitching the pockets together in horizontal rows. Either hand- or machine-sew the longer sides together until you have five pockets in a row. Repeat this until you have ten rows of five pockets. If choosing to machine sew, use a zigzag stitch or similar and carefully butt two longer edges of the pockets together and stitch across the two edges, making sure each side is firmly attached.

9 Now stitch each row of five pockets together until you have 10 rows of pockets attached to each other.

10 Pin the two longest tubes down the sides of the quilt. Hand-stitch the edges together.

11 Lay the remaining two tubes across the top and the bottom of the quilt and repeat step 10.

12 Finally, gently steam and plump the entire quilt. ■

*An extract from* Forgotten Ways for Modern Days *by* Rachele Blondel, £14.99, Kyle Books. *Photography by* Catherine Gratwicke.







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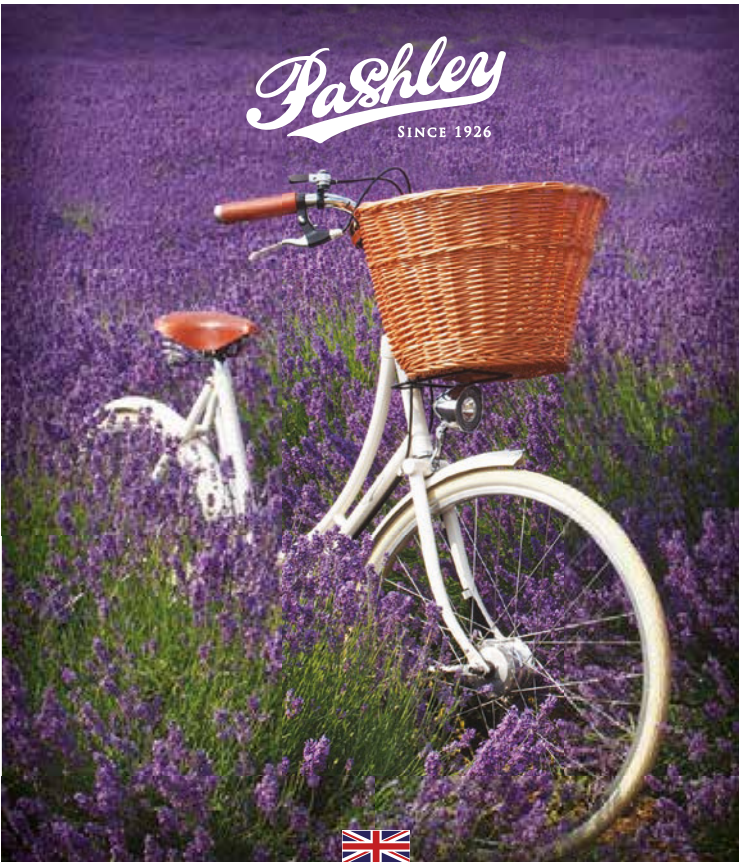
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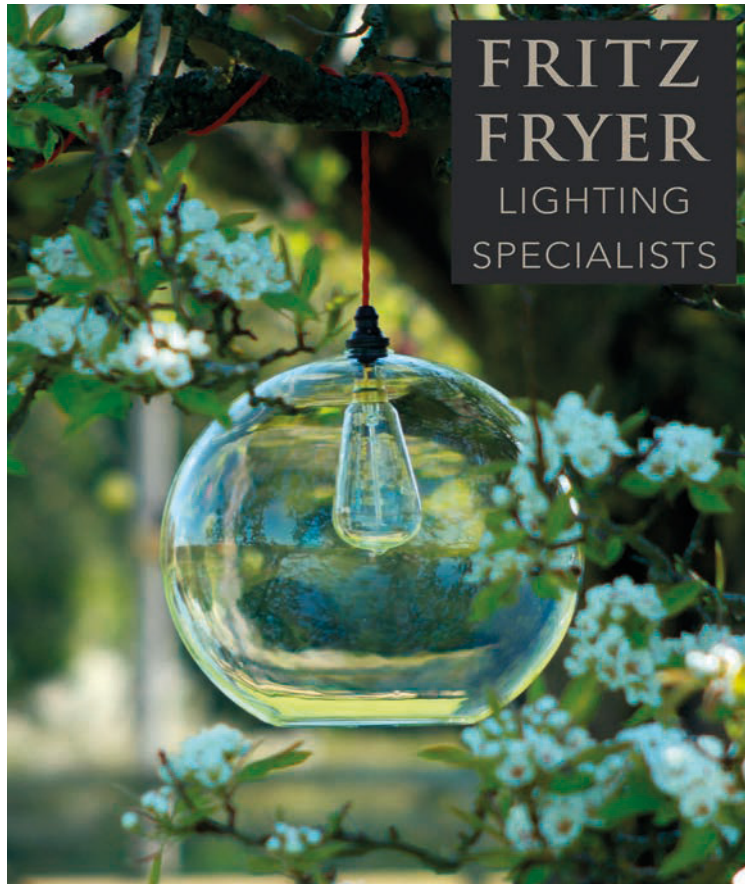
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# The art of SELF EDUCATION

Passionate about quintessential English customs, our incognito columnist reminds us to do the best things in life in the most elegant fashion, always with a twinkle in her eye

## BELOW RIGHT

Annie Sloan stockists are qualified to teach Annie's tried-and-tested techniques for painting furniture, from practical guidance to the secrets of mixing paints to create custom shades. Chalk paint, £18.95 a litre, Annie Sloan

Even though I left education many years ago, when September comes around I still experience that back-to-school feeling. Alongside a shiny pencil case and stiff blazer came that yearning to learn something exciting, to achieve a goal and perhaps to make some new friends.

However hard I try, I just cannot shake it, and it is why, this year, I have decided to learn something new. I often get called upon to help children of friends with their university applications and it makes me feel rather envious when I see the fascinating courses on offer. Mr M says he would rather like to go back to school, too, but I fear it is rather for the extra-curricular activities than to expand his mind.

We are terribly lucky nowadays as there is so much on offer for everyone of every age. Some are brilliantly practical – such as sewing and cookery – whilst others are rather exciting, such as archaeology and politics. Others can be a little odd, including finding your spirit guide and yoga for the face. As I am sure you can imagine, I will be going for something from the sensible list; I just have to decide exactly what that is.

When I was young and newly married, Mr M made it very clear early on that he could not and would not make his own supper, and that if we were to eat well it would be down to me. I enrolled for a number of cookery classes and I am now a keen cook, which Mr M appreciates hugely. Lately, though, I have felt a little jaded. I want to cook more healthily, but also to have some fresh dinner-party standbys. The good news is there are plenty of courses available. In London one can find a host of great day courses.

The courses with Tante Marie range from one day to professional level ([tantemarie.co.uk](http://tantemarie.co.uk)).

I think it important to keep interested in food

trends, and going on a course ignites my interest in the kitchen. This was particularly important to me when the children were small. Cooking for a family can become a drudge, and classes forced me to try new things and not get too stuck in a rut.

Now that Mr M and I are alone all week, I want us both to eat healthily (if Mr M had his way we would dine seven days a week on fillet steak and my excellent gratin dauphinoise). I have therefore been looking carefully at courses where one can learn as much about nutrition as cooking.

The College of Naturopathic Medicine ([naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com)) offers courses at campuses across the UK, which range from those that ensure one is feeding one's family with nutritious foods, to those designed to build a career on.

I was not a natural gardener and, although we are lucky enough to have always had help with ours, I did feel it important to learn all I could about creating and maintaining a beautiful outdoor space. The English Gardening School at the Chelsea Physic Garden ([chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk](http://chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk)) was a godsend. I began by taking day courses, but enjoyed them so much I signed up for a one-year diploma. It was honestly one of the best things I have done. Not only did it teach me how plants work, but also how to get the very most from my garden.

Over the years, I have taken many other courses. I am particularly fond of those run by Annie Sloan chalk paint stockists, where I have learned all sorts of interesting techniques. They are wondrous fun and terribly useful.

Keen to find a joint interest ►





(I cannot bear cricket, fly fishing or bridge), Mr M and I have tried everything from novel writing to ballroom dancing, with neither going particularly well. I, it turned out, am too fond of adverbs and he has two left feet. He was keen earlier in the year to take life-drawing classes. When I pressed him further, I learned the poor soul had walked past the village hall when one of the local au pairs was earning a little extra cash by modelling for the students. Sadly for Mr M, by the time we had secured our places, she had gone back to Lithuania and a local long-distance lorry driver had taken her place on the chaise longue.

Mr M encourages my endeavours. He is always keen to try my culinary homework and often boasts about how well my flower-arranging skills came on after the weekend course I took in the Cotswolds one summer. I am suspicious, however, that the devious old fool has an ulterior motive and is rather more intent on getting me out of the house for a few hours.

In the end, for this autumn's programme of self-improvement, he settled on joining a wine appreciation society. He insists it will expand his knowledge on the subject, but I am convinced he believes he has simply found a way to circumvent my insistence that he never partake of any more than the recommended daily units of alcohol.

If thinking of dipping a toe in the water of classes, it is often a good idea to join a taster course or attend a workshop. Upon retirement or semi-retirement it is also well worth taking a look at the University of the Third Age website ([www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)) as it has so many suggestions. It is also a good way to meet like-minded, local people, something that can be a little tricky if one has always had a full-time career.

It is my belief that we should all continue to learn and improve ourselves throughout life and that there is nothing that cannot be learnt if one puts one's mind to it. Mr M has often suggested I find a course on tact and diplomacy in the modern world. I do think I could do well as a diplomat at large, although, on

reflection, I am starting to think this may not be quite what he meant. ■



**LEFT** A leaning tower of textbooks, topped with an apple for the teacher, is enough to transport anyone back to their school days, and ignite a renewed thirst for knowledge.



## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

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### WATERPERRY GARDENS

Waterperry offers so many great courses it is difficult to know where to begin. The gardening courses are well respected and perfect for both beginners and those looking to learn more intricate skills, such as creating willow garden structures. Also on offer are art and craft courses run by dedicated teachers. I always think if one is struggling for an idea for a birthday present, or one wants to give a friend a lovely treat, then a Waterperry course is just the thing. Course listings and information can be found at [waterperrygardens.co.uk](http://waterperrygardens.co.uk)



### KLC SCHOOL OF DESIGN

Another renowned institution is the KLC School of Design. For more than 30 years aspiring interior and garden designers have been learning their craft at this family-run school. There is a wide range of courses on offer, including full-time study as well as part-time courses. These include some run on Saturdays, which is great for those who work weekdays. There are also short courses and workshops on offer. To find out more, visit [klc.co.uk](http://klc.co.uk)





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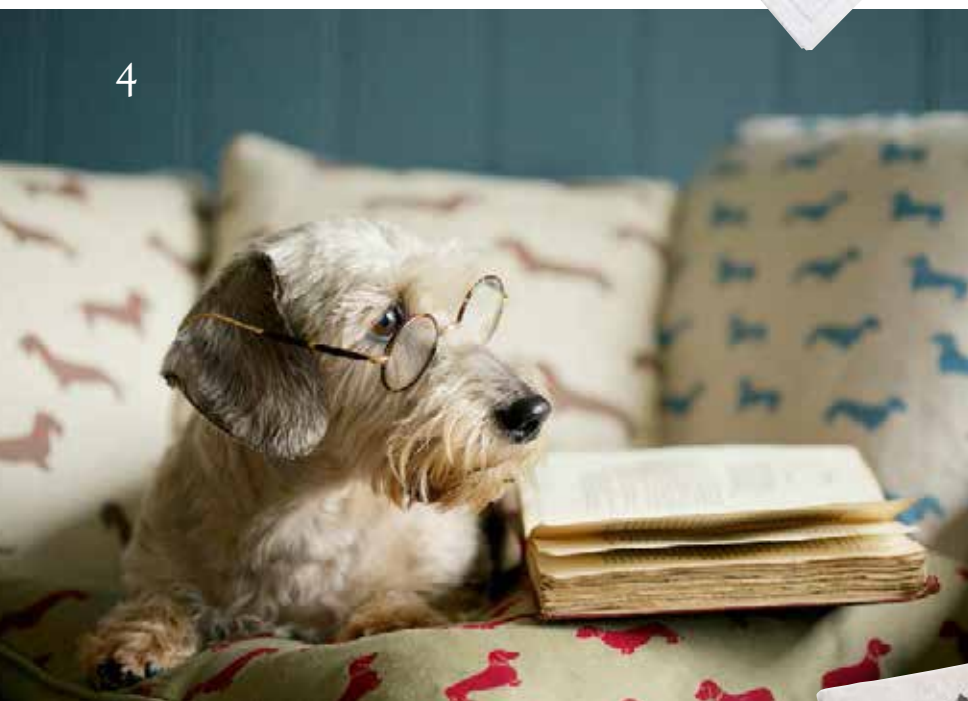
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3



4

# Hound & Home

Many an English home features a four-legged occupant or two. This selection of home accessories celebrates the English love of dogs



5

*"The poor dog, in life the firmest friend, the first to welcome, foremost to defend"*

Lord Byron



6



7

**1 ON WATCH** This elegant greyhound, based on a sculpture by Jose Luis Santes, will keep watch whilst you hunker down with a good read. *Pensive Greyhound Lamp*, 69cm x 35cm, £540, Llado **2 DINNER DATE** The perfect dinner party conversation starter....napkins featuring embroidered motifs of a Dalmatian, spaniel, lurcher or whippet (one of each per set). Set of 4 cotton *Grand Chien Napkins*, £49, Oka **3 MUG SHOT** This set of mugs, featuring a Labrador, spaniel, pug, dachshund, Jack Russell and Scottie has proven to be Fenella Smith's most popular to date. Set of six dog mugs, £87, Fenella Smith

**4 LAP OF LUXURY** Emily Bond has long used dog motifs. These Linen union cushions are available in a variety of designs. Red, blue and wire-haired Dachshund, and black Labrador cushions, from £47 for a 12-inch cushion.

**5 TERRIER TALES** A sweet addition to adorn the kitchen range. *Heat-resistant Terrier Double Oven Gloves*, £16, Sophie Allport **6 COSY COMPANION** This warming grey tweed throw is made from 100 per cent lamb's wool. *Scottie Dog Throw*, 185 x 145cm, £99.95, Highgrove **7 SAUSAGE DOGS** Ward off autumnal chills with this cheering design. *Dog Draught Excluder*, £54, Joanna Wood Ltd



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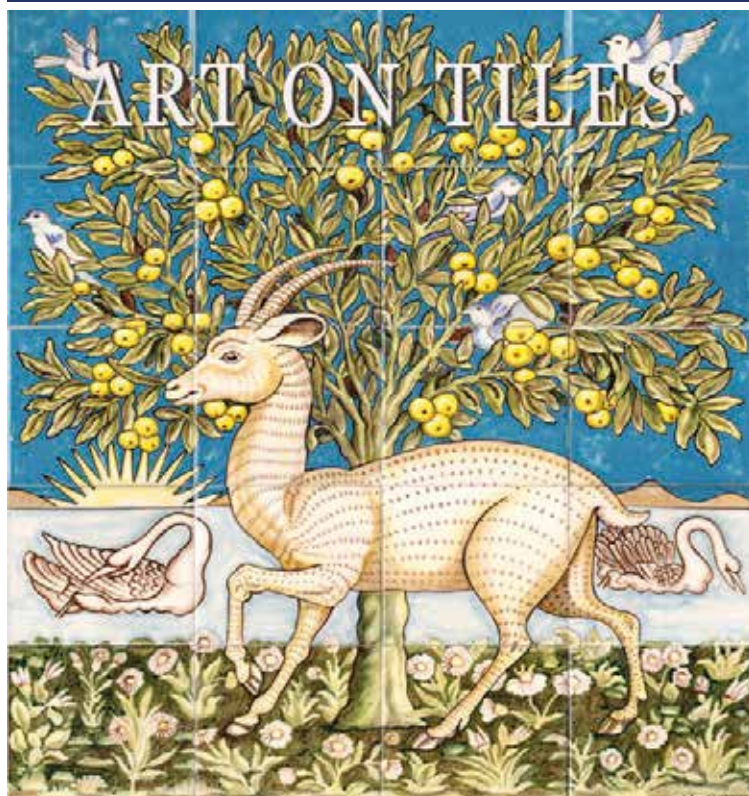


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Attention to detail comes from doing something we love, and James Cook, MD of The Odd Chair Company, is certainly passionate about furniture. He recently bought a couple of Charles II chairs from the famous Kinross estate, which possess a wonderful “sense of the period.” The chairs are notable gems to add to the company’s archives, which include pieces from as early as the sixteenth century. “We probably have the largest stock of antique upholstery in the UK,” Cook reveals.

The Odd Chair Company was started in 1969 by Susan Cook, who bought and restored upholstered antiques, and then moved on to crafting reproduction pieces. The company also produces modern and bespoke furniture designs for worldwide clientele.

Having built up a treasure trove of historic furniture and a vast breadth of expertise, inspiration can often be close at hand. “For example, we’ve just finished making a Victorian ‘Howard’ shaped sofa, and it had a really nice pulled-over arm, so that will form the basis for an arm on a modern chaise we are making,” explains James Cook, who is the third generation of the family to take the company’s helm.

It is not just style that is informed by traditional pieces, either. “The thing that the Victorians got absolutely spot on was comfort. Modern-day manufacturers often lose sight of the core principals of what creates comfort,” says Cook. Mindful of this lesson, great consideration is given to every aspect of each seat’s form, from the angle of the back to hand-tied individual springs to a duvet-style feather-and-down overlay; “So the minute you sit in the seat, it’s completely soft and inviting.”

Each piece is hand-turned, hand-cut and hand-polished. Although the company’s 14 craftsmen are specialists, they can each craft any piece of furniture from start to finish. Cook muses: “I think that’s why we score very highly in happiness surveys, because our craftsmen have real pride in their work.”

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** The company can advise on bespoke projects. All pieces are made with timber from the centre of the tree, to avoid knots. The frames are triple plugged and screwed, “We joke that you could pop a car on one of our frames – they are that sturdy,” says Cook. Legs are all hand-carved. A choice of 26 French polishes is available. Bespoke polishes can also be created.



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